

# **TERROR** **Television**

**American Series, 1970–1999**



**John Kenneth Muir**

# Terror Television

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# Part I

## The Horror Series

## Rod Serling's *Night Gallery* (1970–1973)

### CRITICAL RECEPTION

“*Twilight Zone* was usually ironic. *Night Gallery* was often just depressing, with very dark stories and very downbeat endings ... it was like the dark side of Rod Serling ... I liked it because I thought it was a real change for television to have something so dark.... There were some really fine actors and actresses in it.... And it had very offbeat stories.... A nice change.”—Bob Wisehard, *The Best of Science Fiction Television*, page 126.

“a watered down *Thriller* with Serling doing the Boris Karloff hosting job.... Nonetheless *Night Gallery* produced a number of interesting episodes, including adaptations of H.P. Lovecraft’s ‘Cool Air’ and ‘Pickman’s Model.’ It also presented an episode which must rate as one of the most frightening ever telecast on TV.... ‘Boomerang’ [“Caterpillar”] based on a story by Oscar Cook, dealt with a little bug called an earwig.”—Stephen King, *Danse Macabre*, page 243.

“This NBC offering was perhaps the first network show to commit itself completely to the macabre.... As such it had its ups and downs, sometimes coming up with a good moment but usually falling victim to its own heavy-handedness.”—Les Daniels, *Living in Fear*, Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1975, page 230.

“the show skipped between serious, often Lovecraftian, horror-fantasy episodes and serio-comic playlets. Although it was something of a sad departure from series activity for Serling, the show did contain moments of true horror and mood-drenched atmosphere.”—Christopher Wicking and Tise Vahimagi, *The American Vein: Directors and Directions in Television*, E.P. Dutton, NY, 1979, page 252.

“Rod Serling fronted a slow-paced but occasionally inspired follow-up to *The Twilight Zone* titled *Night Gallery*, which was a mix of short jokey pieces with longer, more serious tales.”—Jon Abbot, *TV Zone*: “Spooky Anthology Series,” November 1992.

### FORMAT

Rod Serling is the viewer’s tour-guide through a most unusual museum: the *Night Gallery*. In this nocturnal arcade of the morbid, each *objet d’art* is penned in ink, charcoal ... and blood. The paintings, which bear the stench of the grave and of formaldehyde, all tell a macabre, often downright horrifying story. As for host Rod Serling, he is slightly different here than in his more well-known *Twilight Zone* persona. For one thing, he is seen in color and sans his once ubiquitous cigarettes, and for another, he appears more haggard and leathery. In one episode, Serling even refers to himself as an “undernourished Alfred Hitchcock.”

In every episode of this anthology TV series, Serling welcomes viewers to the show, leads them to a painting (or sometimes a sculpture) in the large black gallery, and then discusses it briefly, usually with much alliteration. As the camera zooms in on the painting in question, the story proper begins. Unlike *The Twilight Zone*, the stories in *Rod Serling’s Night Gallery* vary greatly in length. In the first

season (as part of an omnibus called *Four-In-One*), the show was one hour long, with two or more stories per hour. This format was carried over into the second season, but the show was shortened to a half-hour format during its third and final season. In between longer, more serious stories, there are often humorous “black-outs” involving such famous and popular movie monsters as the Frankenstein monster, Dracula, the Phantom of the Opera, and Jekyll and Hyde. These transitional pieces are one-joke affairs, seldom lasting more than two minutes.

Unlike *The Twilight Zone*, the stories in *Rod Serling’s Night Gallery* are lensed in color, and feature no closing narration.

## HISTORY

Rod Serling (1924–1975) has been, is now, and always will be remembered primarily for his classic TV series, *The Twilight Zone* (1959-64). He not only created the CBS series, he wrote more than 90 of the 156 episodes of *The Twilight Zone*, and in the process spawned a franchise which has spanned four decades and come to include a big-budget feature film (*Twilight Zone: The Movie* [1983]), a network TV revival (*The Twilight Zone* [1985-87; 1989]), magazines, books, reference guides and the like. *The Twilight Zone*, and even host Serling himself, have become popular American icons.

Not so lucky, and not so well-remembered, is Rod Serling’s second stab at a genre anthology series, *Rod Serling’s Night Gallery*. Perhaps not surprisingly, this follow-up anthology was built on the ashes of *The Twilight Zone* in the mid-60s. Soon after the cancellation of *Zone* in 1964, ABC showed interest in the *Twilight Zone* property, which was still popular and still well-rated. Since a switch in networks was considered, the “new” ABC *Twilight Zone* continuation required a new franchise name so as to avoid lawsuits, and ABC president Tom Moore suggested a title to Serling: *Witches, Warlocks, and Werewolves* (based on an anthology Serling had recently edited).<sup>1</sup> Serling was open to the idea of a supernatural anthology but proposed his own title: *Rod Serling’s Wax Museum*. In this series, Serling would again play the role of on-screen host, but he would conduct his duties inside a gothic wax museum. Each figure in the museum would then be a starting point for a dramatic tale, similar in content to *The Twilight Zone*. This idea was later translated into the *Night Gallery* format, but with ghoulish paintings and sculptures replacing the wax figures. The proposed project collapsed, however, over Moore’s insistence that the new series concentrate on cemeteries, ghouls, and other less-than-cerebral aspects of the horror genre. Serling, who had always utilized television as an avenue to express ideas instead of to sell products, blanched at the idea of a mindless foray into hobgoblin territory and was reluctant to go forward. The project died, and Serling moved on.

Following his failure to revive *The Twilight Zone* in a new format, Rod Serling kept busy by working on other projects, including a postmodern Western TV series starring Lloyd Bridges called *The Loner* (1965-66), and an NBC TV movie entitled *The Doomsday Flight* (1966). He also wrote the initial screenplay adaptation of Pierre Boulle’s *Monkey Planet* novel (eventually known as *Planet of the Apes* [1968]). Still, Serling longed to return to the world of dramatic anthologies, a venue where he could take philosophical stands and yet still entertain people by the millions. His avenue for reaching this dream was a book he wrote in 1967, an anthology featuring three horrific novellas. The book, *The Season to Be Wary*, even won Serling the prestigious Edgar Award from the Mystery Writers of America. The novellas included in the text were “The Escape Route,” a story about a fugitive Nazi; “Color Scheme,” a story suggested to Serling by friend Sammy Davis Jr., about King Connacher—a racist and rabble rouser; and “Eyes,” about an unscrupulous blind woman’s thirst to reacquire sight.



Almost instantly, *The Season to Be Wary* was adapted into a major TV movie, a back-door pilot for the *Night Gallery* TV series. “Color Scheme” was deleted from the mix, and replaced by a more traditional horror story entitled “The Cemetery.” Interestingly, five or so years after his refusal to compromise with ABC and create a flat-out horror show, Serling softened his stance and embraced the concept, perhaps because he recognized that horror, like science fiction or fantasy, was an appropriate genre through which to talk intelligently to the youth of America and say things that simply could not be said in westerns, situation comedies, or straightforward dramatic TV. As he explained, at the height of the Vietnam era:

The occult is very attractive to young people—probably because it is such complete escapism. Thanks to the daily bombardment of bad news they get through the media, real life can be pretty cary.... By contrast, vampires and ghosts don’t seem so bad.<sup>2</sup>

Serling’s *Night Gallery* TV movie aired on NBC the night of November 8, 1969, and it received high ratings. This success was due in no small part to Serling’s excellent writing, though other exceptional talent was involved as well. Another famous Rod, Roddy McDowall (*Planet of the Apes* [1968], *The Legend of Hell House* [1973], *The Fantastic Journey* [1977], *Fright Night* [1985]) headlined the first of the horrific troika, the revenge-from-beyond-the-grave tale called “The Cemetery.” The second story, “Eyes,” featured a rare TV appearance by Joan Crawford and was directed by a 21-year-old film novice named Steven Spielberg! The third and final story, “Escape Route,” featured Richard Kiley and Sam Jaffe in riveting, stand-out performances.

The *Night Gallery* TV movie performed so strongly for NBC that it greenlighted production on a TV series, *Rod Serling’s Night Gallery*. An announcement to that effect was printed in *The New York Times* on March 27, 1970. Unlike *The Twilight Zone* (except during its misconceived fourth season), *Rod Serling’s Night Gallery* was to be an hour long and would “consist of two stories in each outing.”<sup>3</sup> Still, all was not good news—there was a caveat. NBC was hedging its bets by test-running *Night Gallery* under the umbrella title *Four-in-One* (1970-71). This meant that Rod Serling’s new horror anthology would share its Wednesday 10:00 PM time slot with three other series on a rotating basis. The TV series that *Night Gallery* shared its slot with were *McCloud* (1970-77), *San Francisco International Airport* (1970-71), and *The Psychiatrist* (1971) starring Roy Thinnes. In the final analysis, this meant that *Rod Serling’s Night Gallery* would air only six times during its maiden season. Still, the series prevailed again: only *Night Gallery* and *McCloud* survived the tumultuous season, with *San Francisco International Airport* and *The Psychiatrist* biting the dust.

During *Night Gallery*’s first season on the air, Rod Serling went on record with his feelings about TV in general, and how he viewed it at this vantage point in his career. These mellow-sounding words would soon come back to haunt him on the set of his latest creation:

There was a time when I wanted to reform television. Now I accept it for what it is. So long as I don’t write beneath myself or pander my work, I’m not doing anyone a disservice.<sup>4</sup>

Despite bad times to come, *Night Gallery* (in its first year at least) was a TV series to be proud of because Serling managed to inject his own sense of morality, and the series looked seriously and thoughtfully at topical issues such as hunting for sport (“Clean Kills and Other Trophies”), the mid-life crisis (“They’re Tearing Down Tim Riley’s Bar”), cowardice (“Lone Survivor”), and even psychosomatic illnesses (“The Dead Man.”) Horrific imagery was not ignored either, with a devil doll

tormenting a British colonial in “The Doll”; there was even ghoulish humor and irony on display in “The Nature of the Enemy” (by Serling), “Make Me Laugh” (directed by Spielberg) and “The Last Laurel.” And, as icing on the creepy cake, “They’re Tearing Down Tim Riley’s Bar” was nominated for a writing Emmy Award. It was a banner first year, despite the fact that only six hours of *Night Gallery* aired.

Unfortunately, controversy struck *Rod Serling’s Night Gallery* during its sophomore season. The series retained its Wednesday night 10:00 PM time-slot, but it faced new (and dangerous) competition from CBS’s popular and already well-established detective series, *Mannix* (1967-76). Almost at once, NBC, Universal, and series producers descended on Serling and began to apply pressure. They wanted him to tone down the thoughtful, meaningful scripts and add more action, more violence, more flat-out horror ... a move that upset Serling and once again put him in the position of trying to reform popular television to his own taste. Striking back, Serling complained loudly and publicly that the powers-that-be on *Night Gallery* were attempting to turn his series into “*Mannix* in a shroud.” Serling also had serious disagreements with producer Jack Laird (*Ben Casey* [1961-66], *Doctors Hospital* [1975-76], *Switch* [1976-77], *The Gangster Chronicles* [1981]) about the content of *Night Gallery*. Laird championed the inclusion of short, jokey two-minute stories to fit between the longer, more grim ones. These so-called black-outs (“Miss Lovecraft Sent Me,” “The Merciful,” “Junior,” “With Apologies to Mr. Hyde,” “A Matter of Semantics,” “Witches’ Feast,” “A Midnight Visit to the Neighborhood Blood Bank,” “Satisfaction Guaranteed,” and “Phantom of What Opera?”) were banal, one-note jokes which caused critics to ridicule the series and even describe it (disparagingly) as “the supernatural equivalent of *Love, American Style*.”<sup>5</sup>

When push came to shove, Laird and Serling had starkly different ideologies. Where Serling sought to take the horror genre seriously, and appeal to the viewer’s intelligence, Laird went for easy laughs by mocking vampires, the Frankenstein monster, and other classic characters. This double-edged approach hurt *The Night Gallery*, and is largely responsible for the series’ current lack of critical respect. Despite interference from all sides, Rod Serling never let his stories become dumbed-down chillers and he tackled the consequences of violence in “The Waiting Room,” and racial inequality in “You Can’t Get Help Like That Anymore” and “The Different Ones.” He daringly posited the notion of an African-American messiah (Yaphet Kotto) in the Emmy-nominated entry “The Messiah of Mott Street.” The battles over content may have been vicious, but *Night Gallery* boasted other memorable winners as well. “Silent Snow, Secret Snow” (adapted from the Conrad Aiken story and narrated by Orson Welles) visualized autism in frightening, unforgettable terms, and writer’s block was the issue informing Serling’s interesting “Midnight Never Ends.” Even in his least successful contributions to the series, Rod Serling had a special perspective on humanity and his world. As was said of his writing on *Night Gallery* and *The Twilight Zone* years later, at his eulogy:

Rod Serling saw dignity in people like this. He showed us the shadow people, the ones who live on the periphery, who dwell in dark out-of-the-way bars, reliving, subsisting on past times. He showed us people maybe we’d rather not think about. But with that keen perception and sparse dialogue, he grabbed you ... and told you in no uncertain terms that these people deserved at least a little victory, breathing space, someone to care for, someone to care about them.<sup>6</sup>

At its absolute best, *Night Gallery* reflected the Serling ethos as defined in that passage. At its worst, it failed to live up to the quality of *The Twilight Zone* while still proving to be consistently entertaining.

Although *Night Gallery* was trounced in the ratings by the action-packed, ultraviolent *Mannix*, the series returned for a third, and mostly dismal, final season. Sadly, it was but a shadow of its former self. *Rod Serling's Night Gallery* was cut down to a half-hour and Rod Serling found himself hosting a series over which he no longer had any creative control. Early on, he had handed over authority on cast approval and script approval (a decision he often regretted), but now he felt like a hired gun.

In its new 30-minute form, *Night Gallery* moved to Sunday nights at 10:00 PM, but, damningly, *Mannix* was also moved to Sunday nights, as if it was hellbent to kill off *Night Gallery*. The show ran for half-a-season (only 15 episodes) and was finally canceled by NBC in November of 1972, after finishing the year in a dismal 70th place.<sup>7</sup> It was replaced by *Escape* (1973), a half-hour anthology series from Jack Webb which lasted only four episodes.

Before it was done, however, *Rod Serling's Night Gallery* expanded the boundaries of horror on television. It had successfully adapted H.P. Lovecraft ("Cool Air," "Pickman's Model"), Conrad Aiken ("Silent Snow, Secret Snow"), Fritz Leiber ("The Girl with the Hungry Eyes," "The Dead Man"), A.E. Van Vogt ("Since Aunt Ada Came to Stay"), August Derleth ("House—With Ghost," "The Dark Boy"), E.C. Tubb ("Little Girl Lost"), Seabury Quinn ("The Phantom Farmhouse"), and many, many others.

The series had also featured the absolute latest in ghoulish prosthetics and makeup ("Camera Obscura," "Lindemann's Catch," "Pickman's Model," "The Different Ones"), and delved outright into gut-wrenching terror in shows such as "The Sins of the Fathers" and Oscar Cooke's "Caterpillar." In the process, the series also showcased the talents of a new generation of young performers such as Diane Keaton ("Room with a View"), Randy Quaid ("The Late Mr. Peddington"), Mark Hamill ("There Aren't Any More MacBanes"), Rene Auberjonois ("Camera Obscura"), Yaphet Kotto ("The Messiah on Mott Street"), and Richard Thomas ("Sins of the Fathers"). In fact, a list of all of *Night Gallery's* prominent guest casts could take pages, but among the most notable are: Larry Hagman, Joseph Wiseman, Burgess Meredith, Agnes Moorehead, Raymond Massey, William Windom, Clint Howard, Ray Milland, E.G. Marshall, David McCallum, Susan Strasberg, Laurence Harvey, Lindsay Wagner, Vincent Price, Sandra Dee, Leonard Nimoy, Joan Van Ark, and even Sally Field.

More impressively, perhaps, *Night Gallery* employed experienced directors like John Newland (*One Step Beyond* [1959-61]) and Jeff Corey at the same time that it proved a training ground to Steven Spielberg, John Badham (*Blue Thunder* [1983], *WarGames* [1983], *Short Circuit* [1985]), Leonard Nimoy (*Star Trek III: The Search for Spock* [1984], *Star Trek IV: The Voyage Home* [1986], *Three Men and a Baby* [1986], *The Good Mother* [1989]), and Jeannot Szwarc (*Bug* [1975], *Jaws II* [1978], *Somewhere in Time* [1980]). About his tenure on *Night Gallery*, director Szwarc had this to say:

That's where I did some of my best work. It was a good training because it was such a grueling show. We had to shoot some episodes in two or three days. There was a lot of talent on *Night Gallery*.... Of course, we all got to work with Rod Serling. He was an extraordinary human being.<sup>8</sup>

Sadly, even Serling's considerable talent and abilities could not prevent what happened next. After cancellation, Universal Studios wanted to release *Night Gallery* to syndication for rerun "stripping" (i.e., five showings a week). Since the series did not air long enough to make this possibility attractive, Universal opted to tamper with the show. All episodes of *Night Gallery* became a half-hour

in length, regardless of their original running time. This meant that the longer stories (35 to 45 minutes) had critical scenes cut, and that the shorter stories (15 to 20 minutes) had extraneous stock footage added to round out the 30-minute slot. In both cases, the move was catastrophic. The longer stories became incomprehensible because of the deletions, and the shorter stories became intolerable due to inappropriate, even jarring, additions.

For instance, “The Different Ones” (by Serling) was a beautiful story about a deformed boy who is shipped off a conformist Earth to a distant planet where he can finally fit in. Originally, this tale, a kind of latter-day version of *The Twilight Zone*’s famous entry “Eye of the Beholder,” was brief and concise, lasting less than half-an-hour yet making its point without belaboring it. In syndication, however, the show *is* a half-hour long: padded with repeated footage (passed off as a “flashback”) and stock footage from actual NASA spaceflights and the Universal Pictures films *This Island Earth* (1951) and *Silent Running* (1972).

The shift to these feature films is obvious, and the footage makes little, if any, sense in the context of the original teleplay. Similarly butchered is the episode “The Painted Mirror,” in which a nasty antique shop owner (Zsa Zsa Gabor) steps into a painting of prehistoric times and is subsequently trapped there. In the syndicated, tampered-with version, extraneous footage of *lengthy* stop-motion dinosaur fights (from *When Dinosaurs Ruled the Earth* [1970]) has been inserted. In “Big Surprise,” by Richard Matheson, extended sequences from Alfred Hitchcock’s *The Birds* have been added ... to confusing and deleterious effect. In all such cases, good or at least passable *Night Gallery* episodes are rendered unwatchable. This practice succinctly proves how studios view even their own programming as product rather than as art.

Additionally, all 25 episodes of the psychic-phenomenon series *The Sixth Sense* (1972) have also been trimmed down to a half-hour in length and syndicated as part of *Rod Serling’s Night Gallery*. Please see chapter two on *The Sixth Sense* for further details on this particular bit of butchery.

*Night Gallery* deserves better than to be hacked up and mutilated. It is a horror genre pioneer, with some excellent stories, and some very good writing. Sadly, the version of *Night Gallery* which played daily on the Sci-Fi Channel for much of 1998 is the corrupted, edited version that has been available for 20 years. Fortunately, Columbia House declared (also in 1998) that it would soon be releasing a *Night Gallery* collector’s edition on VHS videotape ... the first untainted venue for *Night Gallery* in a quarter century.

Rod Serling, six time Emmy winner and recipient of Sylvania, Peabody, Edgar and Christopher Awards, suffered a heart attack on May 3, 1975, at age 50. Soon after, he died following open-heart surgery at Strong Memorial Hospital in Rochester, New York. Though he left this world on June 28, 1975, Serling and his talents are still with us. Although *The Twilight Zone* is a proud legacy, Serling also left us another: *Night Gallery*. In respect to Serling’s genius and heart, if nothing else, one can hope that *Rod Serling’s Night Gallery* will be restored to its original format on regular, broadcast TV before much longer. It deserves the chance to earn a fandom, just as *The Twilight Zone* did before it.

## CRITICAL COMMENTARY

For some reason, there has been a great temptation on the part of many critics and historians when writing about *Rod Serling’s Night Gallery* to minimize Serling’s involvement in this anthology series. To wit: Serling had no creative control; there were feuds with Jack Laird, Universal and NBC; Serling

was hired basically to sell the series and play on-screen host; Serling's own "better" stories were rejected as too intelligent or too controversial. These are all common refrains about *Night Gallery* and they may, perhaps, be a result of Serling's own unswerving bluntness. He was never hesitant to present his side of a battle to the press, and he was always candid about the quality of his own work. He even once stated that only a third of his *Twilight Zone* episodes were above average, and that another third were "turkeys," an exceedingly harsh judgment for so popular a cultural icon.

Yet when Rod Serling spoke badly of his *Night Gallery* series, which he did on quite a few occasions, people seemed to take his self-criticism to heart, and determine that the series as a whole was weak, and "not worthy" of Rod Serling. Inevitably, this claim of low quality is then backed up by reports of Serling's limited involvement in the series. But, of course, both the claim of low quality and the report of Serling's participation do not necessarily represent fact. For instance, Serling did not merely write a "few" *Night Gallery* episodes, as some have suggested. To the contrary, he actually penned the teleplays for more than 30 installments of the series ... almost one-third of the entire show's run. Granted, his output was not equal (in quantity) to his work on *The Twilight Zone*, but it is still quite significant. For instance, Gene Roddenberry actually wrote approximately a half-dozen episodes of the original *Star Trek* series, but nobody states that his involvement with his creation was limited.

Indeed, *Night Gallery* is certainly a more legitimate heir to *The Twilight Zone* than the CBS '80s remake of that great Serling series because Rod Serling's distinctive voice comes through loud and clear in so many *Night Gallery* episodes. His worldview, his diction, his pacing, his weaknesses and strengths as a writer are all readily evident in *Night Gallery*, as they are in the original *Twilight Zone*. That voice, for better or worse, is missing in the 1980s *Twilight Zone*, and thus those people eager for more Serling stories are urged to give *Night Gallery* a viewing if they have not already done so. It is a legitimate brother to *The Twilight Zone*, with the Rod Serling stamp all over it.

As envisioned by Rod Serling, *The Twilight Zone* had a "sense of cosmic justice, of people getting their just desserts, often with a full helping of irony."<sup>9</sup> As author of *The Twilight Zone Companion*, Marc Scott Zicree established in his work a moral code that was being applied by Serling in his first series. Interestingly, Serling's contributions to *Night Gallery* share the same sense of cosmic justice. In "Clean Kills and Other Trophies," a vicious hunter learns what it means to be a trophy. In "The Waiting Room" a murderous gunslinger with a thirst for violence discovers that it is his fate to relive his final gunfight for all eternity. In "Camera Obscura," a heartless accountant is transported to a world of heartless, blood-sucking ghouls, his "own" kind. In "The Academy," those who break society's laws pay in the most martial terms imaginable.

All these episodes, with teleplays by Serling, not only generated chills aplenty, but showed how a supernatural kind of justice could be meted out to the deserving. Serling's contributions to *Night Gallery* also managed, on the whole, to use horror to make some kind of relevant point about modern society. "The Class of '99" conveyed how physically perfect androids could mimic human beings flawlessly by learning such important human behaviors as racism, nationalism, hatred, and even how to commit murder. "You Can't Get Help Like That Anymore" was another thinly veiled Serling story about racism. In it, decadent human masters mistreated their robot slaves until the oppressed learned to become the oppressors.

Although some of Rod Serling's *Night Gallery* stories seemed like rehashes of his better *Twilight Zone* efforts (particularly "The Different Ones," which echoed "The Eye of the Beholder," and "Dr.

Stringfellow's Rejuvenator," which regurgitated elements of "Dust" and "Mr. Denton on Doomsday") others were standout entries which equaled or even surpassed the best of *The Twilight Zone*. Make no mistake, *Night Gallery* is a product of the liberal early '70s. Racism, the war in Vietnam, the sexual revolution, the Hippie Movement, and other "causes" of the period are all on display in this arcade of terror.

A great deal has been written about the *Night Gallery* episode "They're Tearing Down Tim Riley's Bar," and for good reason. It is Rod Serling's finest work on *Night Gallery*, and one of the series' best episodes to boot. In this installment, it is not ghosts from beyond the grave but ghosts from the past who haunt lonely widower Randolph Lane (William Windom) as he suffers a mid-life crisis and mourns the destruction of his favorite watering hole, Tim Riley's bar. Serling's teleplay is filled with razor-sharp dialogue ("With assistants like that, who needs assassins?" star Windom quips of his rival Bert Convy). More importantly, it is a story that is legitimately about something important: the human condition.

Lane is not just a man facing "scary" hallucinations from 1945, but a man facing no hope, no real chance of a happy future. "They're Tearing Down Tim Riley's Bar" is a different kind of *Night Gallery*, one which acknowledges that the clock doesn't stop for any man. It moves ever forward, and man cannot turn it back to the past ... no matter how much he desires it. This episode is a companion piece to "Walking Distance" on *The Twilight Zone*, in which the old adage "you can't go home again" was so dramatically proven.

Although "They're Tearing Down Tim Riley's Bar" boasts a bit of a cop-out ending (rewritten against Serling's wishes), it does not end on a completely happy note either. The show concludes with two disparate scenes intercut together. In one scene, Randolph is welcomed into the present by his co-workers at a surprise party. In the other, a wrecking ball methodically demolishes Tim Riley's bar, Randolph's only surviving link to the "happy" past. What Serling seems to establish with this teleplay is that the past must inevitably make room for the present, no matter the cost. In all, it is a haunting and deeply moving half hour which artfully demonstrates Serling's career-long desire to return to the idyllic past (a facet seen also in *The Twilight Zone* episode "A Stop at Willoughby"). Yet, side by side with this overwhelming desire for the romantic is Serling's ironcast knowledge that those "good old days" will never come again. "They're Tearing Down Tim Riley's Bar" may be "horror" only by the slimmest of margins, but it is a memorable and melancholy addition to *Night Gallery*.

Serling's other contributions to *Night Gallery* range in quality from the excellent to the mundane. Starting at the top of that hierarchy is "Midnight Never Ends," a story in which a lonely woman picks up a marine hitchhiker on the side of the road only to realize that she has met him, traveled with him, and driven this very road many times before. Serling's innovative teleplay ends when these two characters, vexed by a constant echoing tapping (fingers hitting an unseen typewriter) realize that they are characters in a story at the whim of a fickle God/writer. Thus "Midnight Never Ends" reflects the writer's difficulty in creating good material, a dilemma Serling was no doubt quite familiar with after cranking out over 90 *Twilight Zone* episodes. At the same time, this story is a sly tribute to the act of creation. As Serling's teleplay makes clear, the writer is a God who manipulates his creations (characters in a story) sometimes without any mercy whatsoever. Even more cleverly, Rod Serling establishes in "Midnight Never Ends" that sometimes his characters are just spare parts, recycled people from previous written works who exist only to be inserted here and there. The woman driving the car was a spy in another work, and the guitar-playing marine was once a cowboy in a western.

“Midnight Never Ends” is, in general, an insight into the mind of a writer, and specifically, into Serling’s mind. This episode fully realizes how difficult it is for an author to put aside old ideas and create something really new and exciting, while it also generates a feeling of terror. The horror here stems from that feeling of *déjà vu*—that these events may have all happened before—and that they will happen again and again until maybe, just maybe, “God” will get things right (and written.)

“The Boy Who Predicted Earthquakes” is another terrific Serling episode, adapted from a short story by Margaret St. Clair. In it, a clairvoyant child (Clint Howard) happily predicts the future on a weekly TV show until one day when he falls suspiciously silent. The program executives impose on him until he makes a prediction. Surprisingly, the psychic boy then states that “tomorrow is going to be *different* from anything in the past.” His prediction is dead right—his paranormal abilities have registered the fact that by morning the Earth’s sun will unexpectedly go supernova and destroy the human race and the entire planet! As young Clint Howard makes his strange prediction of a “different” kind of day, his cherubic young face is displayed on a geometric progression of TV monitors, until his face is seen on sixteen of them at once. His expression is deadly earnest, and these shots suggest how the boy’s words, carried across the airwaves, will have great impact on the worldwide viewing audience. Then comes the climactic kicker. Sitting in his apartment, the young psychic is bathed in a red (equating visually to “hot”) light as he reveals the inevitable disaster to his grandfather and a visiting psychologist. Eerie music escalates on the soundtrack, and the camera tracks over the boy’s shoulder into direct view of the round, angry sun hanging in the red sky.

A chilling tale of “What could be,” this *Night Gallery* installment takes the idea of psychic premonitions to a frightening precipice, and then leaves the viewer in a state of shock. It is not particularly enlightening or socially relevant, but it is chilling.

“The Caterpillar,” adapted by Serling from the Oscar Cook short story “Boomerang,” is so terrifying and memorable a *Night Gallery* adventure that it has become part of the American modern pop culture lexicon, an urban legend of sorts. “The Caterpillar” concerns a microscopic bug called an earwig, a nasty little creature who crawls into the ears of human beings, chews his way through the human brain, and then exits from the other ear. In this harrowing tale, a nasty man (Laurence Harvey) seeks to kill another man with the earwig, only to have his plan backfire badly. The would-be murderer wakes up one morning to find the earwig in *his* head. After several days of severe pain, the earwig crawls out of Harvey’s head, and he survives the ordeal. But then the real horror begins as a doctor reports that the earwig was a female, and that she laid eggs inside Harvey’s skull.

Also written by Serling were some less original but equally terrifying portraits. “A Fear of Spiders,” from a short story by Elizabeth Walter, predated *Kingdom of the Spiders* (1977) and *Arachnophobia* (1990) and dealt with an obnoxious critic’s battle with a dog-sized arachnid. “The Doll,” based on the short story by Algernon Blackwood, found a stodgy English colonial battling that old horror trope: the cursed child’s doll. “Rare Objects” saw mobster Mickey Rooney experience cosmic justice as he is imprisoned in a museum of rare collectibles along with such personalities as Anastasia, Amelia Earhart, Adolf Hitler, and Judge Crater. “Lindemann’s Catch” concerned a lonely sea captain who tried to make a woman out of mermaid ... and failed rather egregiously. There was also the popular “The Messiah on Mott Street,” a sort of holiday season *Night Gallery* about an old Jewish grandfather (Edward G. Robinson) facing down the angel of death in his tenement building. This story, like “They’re Tearing Down Tim Riley’s Bar,” was nominated for an Emmy, but it is a little difficult to be too praiseful of this particular Serling story since at least some sources indicate that Serling may have

written it without the permission of its originator, a friend of Serling's named Sy Gomberg.<sup>10</sup>

Rod Serling's weakest stories for *Night Gallery* were probably "The Nature of the Enemy," in which American astronauts cannibalized their spaceships to build a giant mousetrap on the lunar surface, and "The Last Laurel," from a short story by David Grubb in which an astral projection takes a very wrong turn. Despite these occasional clunkers, Serling brought a moral awareness to the Gothic universe of *Night Gallery*, and provided the show with some of its finest moments. Every third show was Serling's, so his presence is ubiquitous.

It would be wrong to suggest that *Night Gallery* flourished only when Rod Serling was at the creative helm. Producer Jack Laird oversaw the production of the series and he worked long hours and in difficult situations to assure that *Night Gallery* would be a successful venture. If there were significant battles between Laird and Serling, as many have written, they were about how best to achieve that goal of success. Clearly, Serling and Laird had differing opinions, with Laird often rewriting others' work, and Serling complaining that "his" *Night Gallery* had become too commercial in its approach to horror.

This much is certain: Laird must take the responsibility for the humorous, short blackouts inserted between more serious stories on *Night Gallery*, as he penned "The Merciful," about a wife (Imogene Coco) boarding herself up behind a brick wall, "With Apologies to Mr. Hyde," in which Dr. Jekyll complains about the ingredients in his potion, "Satisfaction Guaranteed," which saw cannibal Victor Buono ordering various secretaries from a temp service as if they were on a restaurant's menu, "Miss Lovecraft Sent Me," about a girl babysitting a vampire, "A Midnight Visit to the Neighborhood Bloodbank," in which an overfed vampire (Victor Buono again) is told by his victim that she gave at the office, and others. Worse, Laird championed this sophomoric level of humor and brought it into longer entries as well. In "The Late Mr. Peddington," Kim Hunter shops around for the cheapest funeral for her as yet not-deceased cheapskate husband, and in "Stop Killing Me," a hysterical wife (Geraldine Page) is literally "worried" to death by her husband's unceasing tauntings. While these shows may have been Laird's sincere attempt to homogenize horror ideas for general TV audience consumption, these jokey shorts today seem silly instead of genuinely funny. They make it look as if *Night Gallery* is mocking horror conventions and horror stories, in essence biting the hand that feeds it.

*Night Gallery* is at its ghoulish best when it takes its horror premises seriously and does not attempt to mitigate terror for the sake of tongue-in-cheek cheap shots. An example of the series' brilliance is the second season medieval entry, "The Sins of the Father," written by Halsted Welles (from a short story by Christianna Brand) and directed by Jeannot Szwarc. In this memorable excursion into darkness, young Richard Thomas is sent by his manipulative mother (Geraldine Page again) to the funeral feast of a dead man. It is a time of famine, and Thomas's family is desperately in need of food. However, Thomas is warned not to eat any food at the banquet while in the presence of the corpse, lest he should "eat" the sins of the dead man and be burdened with them himself. Thomas must therefore steal the food while pretending to eat it, and then bring it home to his mother and father. Of course, he has a nasty shock waiting for him at home. His father, the local sin-eater, has died and now Thomas's stolen feast will be weighted down with the sins of his own father ... who has eaten lifetimes and lifetimes of sin! As the episode closes, Thomas screams in pain as he gobbles down the sins of his oh-so-sinful father.



“The Sins of the Father” is an unusually disturbing and grim episode not only because it is about desperation and starvation, but because it is about, in a bizarre way, duty and family. As Thomas is burdened with the sins of his father (so his father’s spirit can travel to heaven), Geraldine Page whispers slyly to him: “Don’t worry, you’ll have a son,” indicating that this monstrous cycle will continue and that this “duty” to the father is expected, even routine. “Sins of the Father” is also shot very effectively, with several dramatic close-ups of the tantalizing food that Thomas must not eat, his hungry eyes, his dry lips, and even the reason for the feast: the unmoving cadaver who is the guest of honor. This is a world of famine, of hunger, where a mother will sell her son’s soul for a few thick slabs of bacon. It is a terrifying place to visit, and *Night Gallery* takes us there without batting an eye.

Another noteworthy chiller is “The Ghost of Sorworth Place,” in which a wayward American traveler happens across a strange old mansion and falls in love with the beautiful widow living alone there. It’s a sort of *Rebecca* (1940) or *Jane Eyre* Gothic scenario, with the lovely Jill Ireland warning the lustful Richard Kiley that she can never love “anything living.” Kiley mistakenly assumes that this remark simply indicates that she is a cold and emotionless woman incapable of love, but he finds out it means that she has a kinky taste for sex with ghosts. Learning this little fact costs the man his life.

*Night Gallery* had many other programming victories as well. “Silent Snow, Secret Snow,” based on the Conrad Aiken story and narrated by Orson Welles, was a real horror tale about a boy named Paul who slowly but surely loses hold of reality, slipping into a kind of autism. His family searches in vain for physical problems, but this is clearly an issue of mental health as Paul starts to live in a solitary world of perpetual ice and snow. Accordingly, the episode is shot in what can only be called icy fashion. A white glass chandelier blurs and becomes a reasonable facsimile of a hanging icicle, the ever-present snow grows heavier and deeper until it buries Paul’s mind, hiding and muffling the sound and sights of the real world.

Through the entire, poetic half-hour show, images of snow predominate. White, clean, pure, and natural snow is purposefully juxtaposed with Paul’s artificial world of bracing doors and ceiling, sharp angles and drab colors. The viewer, like Paul, sees “through the counterpoint of snow” and begins in some manner to understand the boy’s malaise. The outside world with its boring school lectures and close-ups of hard-faced adults does seem a terrible nuisance compared with the elegance and simplicity of falling snow.

As Welles’ narrative mesmerizes the audience with its breathy, rapid tenor, Paul’s world shrinks until it can include nothing but himself and the snow. Always the snow. “Silent Snow, Secret Snow” is a hypnotic, brilliantly filmed show, a very dark and hopeless tale of a boy disassociating permanently from reality.

The real joy of *Rod Serling’s Night Gallery* is its flexible format. As a horror anthology, the sky was the limit, and *Night Gallery* was able to accommodate every variety of horror story known to man during its three year run. From the old tropes like killer dolls (“The Doll”), ghosts (“The Ghost of Sorworth Place,” “The House”), werewolves (“The Phantom Farmhouse”), vampires and vampire-like creatures (“A Feast of Blood,” “Girl with the Hungry Eyes,” “Death on a Barge”), to H.P. Lovecraft adaptations (“Cool Air,” “Pickman’s Model”), socially relevant morality plays (“Clean Kills and Other Trophies,” “Class of ’99,” “They’re Tearing Down Tim Riley’s Bar,” “The Academy”) and even examinations of mental illness (“Silent Snow, Secret Snow,” “Whisper”), the series rarely failed to be interesting. Because it showcased so many types of stories, and did it so well, it might rightly be named ground zero for modern terror TV, the jumping-off point for later series such as *Kolchak: The*

*Night Stalker, Monsters, Tales from the Crypt*, and even *The X-Files*. At the time of its production, Rod Serling may have felt that *Night Gallery* was the worst experience of his writing career, but the work that he and Jack Laird did on this anthology is not just solid, but quite impressive and memorable.

## CAST AND CREDITS

*Cast:* Rod Serling (curator).

*Crew:* *Created by:* Rod Serling. *Produced by:* Jack Laird. *Musical Score (various episodes):* Paul Glass, John Lewis, Gil Melle, Hal Mooney, Oliver Nelson, Robert Prince, Ed Sauter. *Theme Music:* Gill Melle. *Directors of Photography (various episodes):* Gerald Perry Finnerman, Richard C. Glouner, Lionel Lindon, William Margulies, Leonard J. South, E. Charles Straumer, Bud Thackery. *Art Director:* Joseph Alves Jr., Sidney Latwick. *Set Decorations:* Bert F. Allen, Chester R. Bayhi, S. Blydenburgh, John M. Dwyer, Howard Jerry Miggins. *Unit Manager:* Burt Astor. *Assistant Directors:* Ralph Sariago, Les Berke. *Film Editors (various episodes):* Jean J. Berthelot, Howard Epstein, Bud Hoffman, James Leicester, Larry Lester, David Rawlins, Joe Schoengarth, Robert F. Shugrue, Stanford Tischler, Sam Vitale, Robert Watts. *Sound (various episodes):* Lyle Cain, David H. Moriarty, Roger A. Parish. *Gallery Paintings:* Tom Wright. *Gallery Sculptures:* Logan Elston, Phil Vandierle. *Editorial Supervision:* Richard Belding. *Costumes:* Grady Hunt, Bill Jobe. *Hair Stylist:* Larry Germain. *Main Title Design:* Wayne Fitzgerald, Visual Computing Corporation. *Titles and Optical Effects:* Universal Title. *Production Executive:* Paul Freeman. *Executive Story Consultant:* Gerald Sanford. *Assistant to the Producer:* Anthony Redman. *Production Associates:* Burt Astor, Anthony Redman, Herbert Wright. *In Technicolor.* From Universal Studios. Distributed exclusively by MCA-TV.

## EPISODE GUIDE

### • *Telefilm*

“**Night Gallery**” (November 8, 1969)

**A. “The Cemetery”** Written by Rod Serling; Directed by Boris Sagal; *Cast:* Roddy McDowall (Jeremy); Ossie Davis (Osmond); George Macready (Hendricks).

A selfish young man yearns for the death of his rich old uncle so that he can inherit the family’s incredible wealth. A painting in the old man’s estate becomes an instrument of the occult when it starts to reflect terrifying changes in the family graveyard.

**B. “Eyes”** Written by Rod Serling; Directed by Steven Spielberg; *Cast:* Joan Crawford (Claudia Menlo); Barry Sullivan (Dr. Heatherton); Tom Bosley (Sydney).

A cruel old blind woman with the lust to see again has the money and the will to get her way. She receives an eye transplant from a poverty-stricken donor and a guilt-ridden doctor, but is foiled in her plans to achieve sight when a citywide blackout plunges her world into darkness once more.

**C. “Escape Route”** Written by Rod Serling; Directed by Barry Shear; *Cast:* Richard Kiley (Joseph Strobe); Sam Jaffe (Blume); George Murdock (Agent); Norma Crane (Gretchen).

A Nazi war criminal on the run realizes he has been “made” by a Jewish survivor of Auschwitz. The Nazi seeks a bizarre escape when he becomes a permanent part of a painting in an art gallery.

• *Series Episodes: First Season (1970–1971, as part of Four-in-One)*

**1A. “The Dead Man”** Written and directed by Douglas Heyes; From a story by Fritz Leiber; airdate: December 16, 1970; *Guest Cast:* Carl Betz (Dr. Max Redford); Jeff Corey (Dr. Miles Talmudge); Louise Sorel (Delia Redford); Michael Blodgett (John Feery); Glenn Dixon (Minister).

A physician visits the palatial home of his colleague, Dr. Redford, who has been experimenting with hypnotic suggestion. The specifics of the experiment revolve around a beautiful young man named John, and his odd ability to mimic various diseases and conditions ... including death.

**1B. “The Housekeeper”** Written by Matthew Howard; Directed by John Meredyth Lucas; airdate: December 16, 1970; *Guest Cast:* Larry Hagman (Mr. Cedric Acton); Suzy Parker (Mrs. Acton); Jeanette Nolan (Miss Wattle); Howard Morton (Maurice); Cathleen Cordell (Mrs. Beamish).

An ugly old woman with a kind heart is assigned to be a housekeeper in the home of a most unusual man, Cedric Acton. He plans to put her gentle soul into the body of his beautiful, but cold-hearted and adulterous wife through a black magic process he calls “personality transplant.” But, to his dismay, the transfer doesn’t work out quite the way he intended.

**2A. “Room with a View”** Written by Hal Dresner (from his story). Directed by Jerrold Freedman; airdate: December 23, 1970; *Guest Cast:* Joseph Wiseman (Mr. B); Diane Keaton (Nurse); Angel Tompkins (Lila B); Morgan Farley (Charles); Larry Watson (Chauffeur).

A bed-ridden old man tricks his lovely young nurse into murder when the old man discovers his wife having an affair with the nurse’s fiancé, Vic.

**2B. “The Little Black Bag”** Written by Rod Serling; From a story by C.M Kornbluth; Directed by Jeannot Szwarc; airdate: December 23, 1970; *Guest Cast:* Burgess Meredith (Dr. Fall); Chill Wills (Hepplewhite); George Furth (Gilling); E.J. Andre (Charlie).

A medical bag from the distant future arrives in a 20th-century back alley and becomes a bone of contention for two bums. One man, a physician himself, believes it can cure the ills of the world, but the other man suspects the bag has more profitable possibilities.

**2C. “The Nature of the Enemy”** Written by Rod Serling; Directed by Allen Reisner; airdate: December 23, 1970; *Guest Cast:* Joseph Campanella (Mr. Sims); Richard Van Vleet (Space Man); James Sikking (1st Reporter); Jason Wingreen (2nd Reporter); Albert Popwell (3rd Reporter); Jerry Strickler (Man).

A mission control operator monitors a rescue mission to the moon which has found the wreckage of a previous U.S. space flight. Strangely, the wreckage of the first craft has been converted into a giant mousetrap, suggesting the nature of an unusual enemy.

**3A. “The House”** Written by Rod Serling; From a story by Andre Maurois; Directed by John Astin; airdate: December 30, 1970; *Guest Cast:* Joanna Pettet (Elaine Latimer); Paul Richards (Dr. Peter Mitchell); Steve Franken (Mr. Pugot); Jan Burrell (Nurse); Almira Sessions (Old Woman).

On the last day of her stay in a sanitarium, Elaine Latimer recounts a dream she has experienced for ten years. It involves a beautiful house in the country: a vivid vision of idyllic beauty. Once released from the hospital, Elaine locates her “dream” house and decides to move in ... despite the fact that the last occupants returned to England because the house was haunted.

**3B. “Certain Shadows on the Wall”** Written by Rod Serling; From the story by Mary E. Wilkins Freeman; Directed by Jeff Corey; airdate: December 30, 1970; *Guest Cast:* Louis Hayward (Steven); Agnes Moorehead (Emma); Grayson Hall (Ann); Rachel Roberts (Rebecca).

A sick old woman, Emma, is pushed to her deathbed by her greedy brother, Steven. Her shadow unexpectedly returns to protest this treatment, and Steven meets an unpleasant fate.

**4A. “Make Me Laugh”** Written by Rod Serling; Directed by Steven Spielberg; airdate: January 6, 1971; *Guest Cast:* Godfrey Cambridge (Jackie Slater); Tom Bosley (Jules); Jackie Vernon (Mr. Chatterjay); Al Lewis (Mr. Mishkin); Sidney Clute (David Garrick); John J. Fox (Heckler); Gene Kearney (2nd Bartender); Tony Russel (Director); Michael Hart (Ms. Wilson); Georgia Schmidt (Flower Lady); Sidney Rushakoff (First Laugher); Don Melvoin (Second Laugher).

An unfunny comic is on his last legs when a novice guru grants him a wish: that he has the ability to make people laugh. The comic soon finds, however, that laughter can be a curse rather than a blessing.

**4B. “Clean Kills and Other Trophies”** Written by Rod Serling; Directed by Walt Doniger; airdate: January 6, 1971; *Guest Cast:* Raymond Massey (Colonel Dittmann); Tom Troupe (Mr. Pierce); Barry Brown (Archie Dittmann); Herbert Jefferson, Jr. (Tom).

Colonel Dittmann, an aged millionaire and hunter extraordinaire, threatens to disinherit his liberal, pacifist son unless the young man bucks up and kills a deer for sport. The boy, Archie, reluctantly agrees to the hunt, but it is his father who must pay the ultimate price when an Oxford-educated African manservant named Tom summons the Gods of the Congo ... who have turned vengeance into an art form.

**5A. “Pamela’s Voice”** Written by Rod Serling; Directed by Richard Benedict; airdate: January 13, 1971; *Guest Cast:* Phyllis Diller (Pamela); John Astin (Jonathan).

A husband who murdered his shrill-voiced wife finds he is suffering a case of “stereophonic indigestion” when his beloved ex arrives from the afterlife to guide him to his own personal eternity.

**5B. “Lone Survivor”** Written by Rod Serling; Directed by Richard Benedict; airdate: January 13, 1971; *Guest Cast:* John Colicos (Survivor); Torin Thatcher (Captain).

An unscrupulous and cowardly man uses any means at his disposal to escape the sinking of the *Titanic*. He escapes a cold, watery death by disguising himself as a woman, but later finds that he is destined to suffer the same fate, albeit on other ill-fated voyages.

**5C. “The Doll”** Written by Rod Serling; Based on the short story by Algernon Blackwood; Directed by Rudi Dorn; airdate: January 13, 1971; *Guest Cast:* Shani Wallis (Miss Danton); John Williams (Colonel); Henry Silva (Pandit Chola); Than Wyenn (Indian); Jewel Blanch (Monica); John Barclay (Butler).

After the British-Indian colonial conflict at the turn of the century, a British colonel returns home to discover that a gift, a strange doll, has been sent to his young niece, Monica. The doll has sharp teeth, blackened eyes, and an absolute need to complete a mission of vengeance. The colonel, who has been stationed in India for many years, believes in black magic and knows that the doll will eventually kill him, so he makes plans for some occult vengeance of his own.

**6A. “The Last Laurel”** Written by Rod Serling; From the short story “The Horsehair Trunk” by David Grubb; Directed by Daryl Duke; airdate: January 20, 1971; *Guest Cast*: Jack Cassidy (Marius Davis); Martine Beswick (Susan Davis); Martin E. Brooks (Dr. Armstrong).

A crippled paranoid, Marius, fears his physician has had an illicit affair with his beautiful wife. As punishment, Marius uses his special knack with astral projection to rid himself of his nemesis, but he finds that his out-of-body experience has less than beneficial results for his own health.

**6B. “They’re Tearing Down Tim Riley’s Bar”** Written by Rod Serling; Directed by Don Taylor; airdate: January 20, 1971; *Guest Cast*: William Windom (Randolph Lane); Diane Baker (Miss Lynn Alcott); Bert Convy (Mr. Doane); John Rudolph (Mr. Pritkin); Henry Beckman (Officer McDermott); David Astor (Blodgett); Robert Hermann (Tim Riley); Gene O’Donnell (Bartender); Frederic Downs (Father); John Ragin (First Policeman); David Frank (Intern); Susannah Darrow (Katie); Mary Gail Hobbs (Miss Trevor); Margie Hall (Switchboard Operator); Don Molvoyn (First Workman); Matt Pelto (Second Workman).

On his 25th anniversary with a plastics company, widower Randolph Lane hits an emotional crossroads in his life: he is caught between reliving happy memories from his youth and experiencing a purposeless, competitive rat race in the present. Randy is especially downcast because his favorite drinking hole, Tim Riley’s bar, is being bulldozed to make room for a 20-story bank.

• *Second Season (1971–1972)*

**7A. “The Boy Who Predicted Earthquakes”** Written by Rod Serling; From a short story by Margaret St. Clair; Directed by John M. Badham; airdate: September 15, 1971; *Guest Cast*: Clint Howard (Herbie); Michael Constantine (Mr. Wellman); Bernie Kopell (Reed); Ellen Weston (Dr. Peterson); William Hansen (Godwin); Gene Tyburn (Floor Director); Rance Howard (Cameraman); Rosary Nix (Secretary); John Donald (Grip).

A TV network with low ratings hires a ten-year-old commentator named Herbie who can predict the future with uncanny accuracy. For a while, Herbie’s predictions come true, including one involving an impending earthquake. Then, suddenly, Herbie stops making predictions. When coerced to do so, the boy with ESP goes on the air to predict a perfect future where everybody will be happy and at peace ... but he’s covering up a dark secret.

**7B. “Miss Lovecraft Sent Me”** Written by Jack Laird; Directed by Gene Kearney; airdate: September 15, 1971; *Guest Cast*: Joseph Campanella (Vampire); Sue Lyons (Betsy).

A new babysitter, Betsy, is sent to a vampire’s home by Miss Lovecraft. She realizes too late that she has been selected as Junior’s late-night snack.

**7C. “The Hand of Borgus Weems”** Written by Alvin Sapinsley; From a short story by George

Lengalaan; Directed by John Meredyth Lucas; airdate: September 15, 1971; *Guest Cast*: George Maharis (Peter Lackland); Ray Milland (Dr. Avadon); Joan Huntington (Susan Douglas); Patricia Donohue (Dr. Innokenti); Peter Mamakos (Nico Kazanzakis); Robert Joy (Everett Winterreich); William Mims (Brock Ramsey).

Peter Lackland loses the ability to control his right hand, and he asks a surgeon to amputate it. After the operation, Lackland learns that his murderous, independent hand was possessed by the spirit of a murdered dabbler in the occult named Borgus Weems ... a former tenant in Lackland's apartment.

**7D. "Phantom of What Opera?"** Written and directed by Gene Kearney; airdate: September 15, 1971; *Guest Cast*: Leslie Nielsen (Phantom of the Opera); Mary Ann Beck (Beautiful Prisoner).

A woman who has been kidnapped by the world-famous phantom of the opera is warned by her captor never to remove his mask and gaze upon his hideous countenance. The damsel ignores this ultimatum and reveals that she too is wearing a mask.

**8A. "A Death in the Family"** Written by Rod Serling; Directed by Jeannot Szwarc; airdate: September 22, 1971; *Guest Cast*: E.G. Marshall (Mr. Soames); Desi Arnaz Jr. (Doran); Noam Pitlik (Driver); James B. Sikking (Police Officer); John Williams Evans and Bill Elliott (Policemen).

A funeral home director performs some rather strange treatments on his deceased wards, a fact which comes to the attention of an escaped criminal.

**8B. "The Merciful"** Written by Jack Laird; Directed by Jeannot Szwarc; airdate: September 22, 1971; *Guest Cast*: Imogene Coca (Wife); King Donovan (Husband).

A woman seemingly boarding her husband up behind a brick wall in their basement is actually working to a somewhat different purpose.

**8C. "The Class of '99"** Written by Rod Serling; Directed by Jeannot Szwarc; airdate: September 22, 1971; *Guest Cast*: Vincent Price (Instructor); Brandon De Wilde (Mr. Johnson); Randolph Mantooth (Mr. Elkins); Frank Hotchkiss (Mr. Clinton); Hilly Hicks (Mr. Barnes); Suzanne Cohane (Miss Fields); Barbara Shannon (Miss Peterson); Richard Doyle (Bruce); Hunter Von Leer (Templeton); John Davey (McWhirter); Lenore Kasdorf (Miss Wheeton).

The graduating class of 1999 undergoes an oral final exam. The questions asked, however, have more to do with human and inhuman nature than with the basics of reading, writing, and arithmetic.

**8D. "Witches' Feast"** Written by Gene Kearney; Directed by Jerrold Freedman; airdate: September 22, 1971; *Guest Cast*: Agnes Moorehead, Ruth Buzzi, Fran Ryan, Allison McKay (Witches).

A tale of three old witches, a cauldron, and a fourth witch with an unusual surprise.

**9A. "Since Aunt Ada Came to Stay"** Written by Alvin Sapinsley; Directed by William Hale; airdate: September 29, 1971; *Guest Cast*: James Farentino (Craig Lowell); Michele Lee (Joanna Lowell); Jonathan Harris (Professor Porphyrius); Jeanette Nolan (Aunt Ada Quigley).

Aunt Ada has come to stay with young Joanna Lowell and Joanna's husband Craig, a college professor. Craig soon suspects that the aged Ada is using an herb called "the sinister witch's weed of

antiquity” to steal young Joanna’s body, a fear confirmed by Professor Porphyrius, an expert in the occult.

**9B. “With Apologies to Mr. Hyde”** Written by Jack Laird; Directed by Jeannot Szwarc; airdate: September 29, 1971; *Guest Cast:* Adam West (Dr. Jekyll); Jack Laird (Laboratory Assistant).

Dr. Jekyll is mixed an unsatisfactory potion by his lab assistant, and its lack of vermouth fails to please him.

**9C. “The Flip Side of Satan”** Written by Malcolm Marmorstein and Gerald Sanford; Directed by Jerrold Freedman; airdate: September 29, 1971; *Guest Cast:* Arte Johnson (J.J. Wilson).

A disc jockey from New York City named J.J. Wilson takes a job at a remote radio station called KAPH. However, because of his past sins (which include adultery), he is embraced by Lucifer and made to pay for his trespasses.

**10A. “A Fear of Spiders”** Written by Rod Serling; From a short story by Elizabeth Walter; Directed by John Astin; airdate: October 6, 1971; *Guest Cast:* Patrick O’Neal (Justice Walters); Kim Stanley (Elizabeth).

An arrogant restaurant critic who has been cruel to his lovestruck neighbor, Elizabeth, finds himself growing increasingly threatened by his worst fear: spiders. In desperation, he asks for Elizabeth’s help in fending off an invasion of oversized arachnids.

**10B. “Junior”** Written by Gene Kearney; Directed by Theodore Flicker; airdate: October 6, 1971; *Guest Cast:* Wally Cox (Dad); Barbara Flicker (Mom).

When Junior awakens in the middle of the night and demands a drink of water, his father complies with the unusual child’s request.

**10C. “Marmalade Wine”** Written by Jerrold Freedman; From a short story by Joan Aiken; Directed by Jerrold Freedman; airdate: October 6, 1971; *Guest Cast:* Robert Morse (Dr. Frances Deeking) Rudy Vallee (Roger Blacker).

A man lost in the woods stumbles on the home of Dr. Frances Deeking, a famous surgeon who has been forbidden to practice medicine. When the visitor proves he can predict horse winners and stock market figures, the unusual physician goes to extraordinary means to keep his house guest around.

**10D. “The Academy”** Written by Rod Serling; From a story by David Ely; Directed by Jeff Corey; airdate: October 6, 1971; *Guest Cast:* Leif Erickson (Commandant); Pat Boone (Mr. Holsten); Larry Linville (Cadet Sloane); Ed Call (Drill Instructor); Stanley Waxman (Bradley); Robert Gibbons (Simmons); E.A. Sirianni (Chauffeur); John Gruber (Cadet).

Mr. Holsten, the father of a troubled and possibly criminal child, visits an unusual military academy called Glendalough in hopes of enrolling his boy there. The father finds the school, an unusually harsh place where cadets are actually more like incarcerated inmates, quite to his liking.

**11A. “The Phantom Farmhouse”** Written by Halsted Welles; From a short story by Seabury Quinn; Directed by Jeannot Szwarc; airdate: October 20, 1971; *Guest Cast:* David McCallum (Dr. John

Winter); David Carradine (Gideon); Linda Marsh (Mildred Squire); Ivor Francis (Pierre); Ford Rainey (the Sheriff); Trina Parks (Betty); Bill Quinn (Tom); Gail Bonney (Mrs. Squire); Martin Ashe (Mr. Squire); Ray Ballard (Mr. Grouch); Frank Arnold (Shepherd).

At a private sanitarium, a doctor investigates the death of a former patient in the woods near the Delphinium House. The trail leads Dr. Winters to a beautiful woman, her strange family, a pack of werewolves, and a house that supposedly burned to the ground years ago.

**11B. “Silent Snow, Secret Snow”** Written by Gene Kearney; From a story by Conrad Aiken; Directed by Gene Kearney; airdate: October 20, 1971; *Guest Cast*: Narrated by Orson Welles. Lonny Chapman (Father); Lisabeth Hush (Mother); Radames Pera (Paul); Jason Wingreen (Doctor); Frances Spanier (Miss Buell); Patty Cohoon (Dierdre).

A young boy slowly isolates himself from his family, and finally even from his own life as he dreams of a world filled with snow. This wonderful, beautiful, but somehow ominous snow beckons to Paul until it silences all his contact with the surrounding world.

**12A. “A Question of Fear”** Written by Theodore J. Flicker; From a story by Bryan Lewis; Directed by Jack Laird; airdate: October 27, 1971; *Guest Cast*: Leslie Nielsen (Colonel Malloy); Fritz Weaver (Dr. Mattsey); Jack Bannon (Al); Ivan Bonar (Fred); Owen Cunningham (Waiter).

Colonel Malloy, a war veteran who loathes fear and cowardice, makes a wager for \$10,000 with a crippled white-haired doctor that he can spend an entire night inside a supposedly haunted house without leaving. With gun in hand, the macho Malloy enters the house, and spends the night only to discover the following morning that the doctor has a much more devious and personal motivation behind the bet.

**12B. “The Devil Is Not Mocked”** Written by Gene Kearney; Story by Manly Wade Wellman; Directed by Gene Kearney; airdate: October 27, 1971; *Guest Cast*: Helmut Dantine (The General); Frances Lederer (The Count).

In World War II Transylvania, an arrogant Nazi S.S. officer commandeers a castle belonging to none other than Count Dracula. The famous vampire shows extraordinary patience with the Nazi garrison until the stroke of midnight: the feeding hour.

**13A. “Midnight Never Ends”** Written by Rod Serling; Directed by Jeannot Szwarc; airdate: November 3, 1971; *Guest Cast*: Robert F. Lyons (Vincent Riley); Susan Strasberg (Ruth); Joseph Perry (Bateman); Robert Karnes (Sheriff).

A lonely driver named Ruth picks up a marine heading for Camp Pendleton. As they travel together on a dark highway, each member of the duo realizes that they’ve lived this scenario before ... dozens of times.

**13B. “Brenda”** Written by Matthew Howard; From a story by Margaret St. Clair; Directed by Allen Reisner; airdate: November 3, 1971; *Guest Cast*: Laurie Prange (Brenda); Glen Corbett (Brenda’s father); Robert Hogan (Jim Emsden); Barbara Babcock (Flora Alden); Sue Taylor (Elizabeth); Pamela Ferdin (Frances Ann).



A lonely little girl named Brenda purposely destroys the sand castle built by a neighbor, Frances Ann, and is then rejected for her hostile and cruel nature. When Brenda loudly proclaims that she would rather be friends with “something rotten” than with Frances, her wish unexpectedly comes true. A monster that came to the beach during a low-tide tracks her through the woods.

**13C. “Die Now, Pay Later”** Written by Jack Laird; From the short story by Mary Linn Roby; Directed by Timothy Galfas; airdate: November 3, 1971; *Guest Cast*: Will Geer (Walt Peckinpah); Slim Pickens (Ned).

An undertaker, who also happens to be a warlock, has a year’s end clearance sale on his merchandise. As a result, the death rate in town skyrockets, and one of the deceased is the sheriff’s busybody wife, Etta.

**14A. “The Diary”** Written by Rod Serling; Directed by William Hale; airdate: November 10, 1971; *Guest Cast*: Patty Duke Astin (Holly Schefer); Virginia Mayo (Carrie Crane); David Wayne (Dr. Mills).

A heartless gossip columnist destroys the career of an aging star and leads her to suicide. Later, the writer receives an unusual journal, one which promises a terrifying fate.

**14B. “A Matter of Semantics”** Written by Gene Kearney; Directed by Jack Laird; airdate: November 10, 1971; *Guest Cast*: Cesar Romero (Count Dracula); E.J. Peaker (Nurse); Monie Ellis (Candy Striper).

Count Dracula visits a blood bank in hopes of making a withdrawal.

**14C. “The Big Surprise”** Written by Richard Matheson; Directed by Jeannot Szwarc; airdate: November 10, 1971; *Guest Cast*: John Carradine (Mr. Hawkins); Vincent Van Patten (Chris); Marc Vahanian (Jason); Eric Chase (Dan).

Crazy old Mr. Hawkins stops Chris, Jason, and Dan on their way home from school. He tells them to dig a hole near the old oak tree in a nearby field if they hope to find a “big surprise.”

**14D. “Professor Peabody’s Last Lecture”** Written by Jack Laird; Directed by Jerrold Freedman; airdate: November 10, 1971; *Guest Cast*: Carl Reiner (Professor Peabody); Johnnie Collins III (Mr. Lovecraft); Richard Annis (Mr. Bloch); Louise Lawson (Miss Heald); Larry Watson (Mr. Derleth).

Professor Peabody seems to take great pleasure in demeaning the Old Gods like Cthulu, Azaroth, Shub-Niggath, and the Lurker at the Threshold. His frightened students object to his heresy, but then Peabody compounds his error and starts to read aloud passages from the Necronomicon, the Book of the Dead!

**15A. “House—With Ghost”** Written by Gene Kearney; From a story by August Derleth; Directed by Gene Kearney; airdate: November 17, 1971; *Guest Cast*: Jo Anne Worley, Bob Crane, Alan Napier.

A haunted house might be exactly the thing a man needs to rid himself of his obnoxious, but wealthy, wife.

**15B. “A Midnight Visit to the Neighborhood Blood Bank”** Written by Jack Laird; Directed by

William Hale; airdate: November 17, 1971; *Guest Cast*: Victor Buono (Vampire); Journey Laird (Intended Victim).

An overfed vampire flies into the bedroom of a lovely damsel only to be brushed away with the remark that she “gave at the office.”

**15C. “Dr. Stringfellow’s Rejuvenator”** Written by Rod Serling; Directed by Jerrold Freedman; airdate: November 17, 1971 ; *Guest Cast*: Forrest Tucker (Dr. Stringfellow); Murray Hamilton (Dr. Snyder).

In the Old West, a pitchman named Dr. Stringfellow pitches his “miraculous” rejuvenator, a cordial which he claims invigorates the stomach, stimulates the liver, regulates the kidneys, and restores the health and vitality of the blood. Soon, Dr. Stringfellow is enlisted by a widower to save a terminal child, and forced to pay the consequences for his fraud.

**15D. “Hell’s Bells”** Written by Theodore J. Flicker; From a short story by Harry Turner; Directed by Theodore J. Flicker; airdate: November 17, 1971; *Guest Cast*: John Astin; Jody Gilbert (Fat Lady); Theodore J. Flicker (the Devil); Cecil Cabot (Mrs. Tourist); John J. Fox (Mr. Tourist); Hank Worden (the Bore).

A radical hippie dies in a car accident and journeys to hell. To his dismay, he finds that his afterlife will consist wholly of suburban, middle-class boredom and Muzak, all repeated ... endlessly.

**16A. “The Dark Boy”** Written by Halsted Welles; From a story by August Derleth; Directed by John Astin; airdate: November 24, 1971; *Guest Cast*: Elizabeth Hartman (Mr. Timm); Gale Sondergaard (Miss Abigail); Michael Laird (Joe); Michael Baseleon (Tom); Hope Sommers (Miss Lettie).

When an old school marm retires, her replacement instructor is startled by the appearance of a strange little boy in the classroom. As she soon finds out, the boy actually died years earlier.

**16B. “Keep in Touch—We’ll Think of Something”** Written and directed by Gene Kearney; airdate: November 24, 1971; *Guest Cast*: Alex Cord (Eric Sutton); Joanna Pettet (Claire Foster); Richard O’Brien (Sgt. Joe Brice); Dave Node (Officer Hruska); Paul Trinko (Motorcycle Policeman); Mike Robels (Chauffeur).

In San Francisco, a lonely pianist named Eric Sutton, who has just come out of an ugly divorce, experiences dream visions of his perfect soul mate, and then goes to the police claiming that his dream woman stole his car. When the beautiful woman matching the description of his soul mate appears in the flesh, she reveals to Sutton that she is married, and that her husband had had some strange visions too: of being strangled by a stranger with a scar on his hand.

**17A. “Pickman’s Model”** Written by Alvin Sapinsley; From a story by H.P. Lovecraft; Directed by Jack Laird; airdate: December 1, 1971; *Guest Cast*: Bradford Dillman (Richard Upton Pickman); Louise Sorel (Ms. Goldsmith); Donald Moffat (Uncle George); Jack Livingston (Jerry Rand); Joshua Bryant (Eliot Blackman); Joan Tomkins (Mrs. DeWitt).

An artist finds a lost Richard Upton Pickman masterpiece entitled “A Ghoul Preparing to Die” in his new studio attic. Unknown to the current resident of the studio, the painter Pickman had firsthand

knowledge of a race of subterranean monsters: an evil wretched race of monstrous mutations who would periodically come up from their underground hell to procreate with unsuspecting human women. After saving a young woman's life, Pickman disappeared forever, along with much of his artwork, and now the new owner of his art studio suspects that Pickman's canvasses are hidden in a hole in the basement.

**17B. "The Dear Departed"** Written by Rod Serling; From a short story by Alice Mary Schnirring; Directed by Jeff Corey; airdate: December 1, 1971; *Guest Cast:* Steve Lawrence (Mark); Maureen Arthur (Angie Casey); Harvey Lembeck (Joe Casey); Patricia Donohue (Mrs. Harcourt); Stanley Waxman (Mr. Harcourt); Rose Hobart (Mrs. Hugo); Steve Carlson (Policeman).

A trio of charlatan psychics hoping to bilk mourners out of their money become enmeshed in a love triangle. Angie and Mark are having an affair, and both of them wish Angie's husband, Joe, would leave them alone to carry on their illicit business. When Joe is unexpectedly killed in a traffic accident, Mark and Angie accidentally conjure his spirit ... and find him most difficult to get rid of.

**17C. "An Act of Chivalry"** Written and directed by Jack Laird; airdate: December 1, 1971; *Guest Cast:* Ron Stein, Deidre Hudson, Jimmy Cross.

When a woman enters an elevator with a group of men, they take their hats off to be polite. When the angel of death enters the elevator, he is asked to do likewise.

**18A. "Cool Air"** Written by Rod Serling; From the story by H.P. Lovecraft; Directed by Jeannot Szwarc; airdate: December 8, 1971; *Guest Cast:* Barbara Rush (Agatha); Henry Darrow (Munox); Beatrice Kay (Mrs. Gibbons).

In the 1920s, a mad scientist believes he can prolong life through a kind of primitive cryogenic, refrigeration system. When his machine breaks down one night, a visiting guest discovers the truth about his life-sustaining equipment.

**18B. "Camera Obscura"** Written by Rod Serling; From a short story by Basil Cooper; Directed by John Badham; airdate: December 8, 1971; *Guest Cast:* Ross Martin (Mr. Gingold); Rene Auberjonois (William Scharstead).

A ruthless creditor comes to collect a debt at the home of an eccentric collector, Mr. Gingold. Among Gingold's "toys" is a strange camera which can propel people and objects into a ghoulish netherworld.

**18C. "Quoth the Raven"** Written by Jack Laird; Directed by Jeff Corey; airdate: December 8, 1971; *Guest Cast:* Marty Allen.

Edgar Allan Poe is vexed by an irritating bird with ideas for his next poem.

**19A. "The Messiah on Mott Street"** Written by Rod Serling; Directed by Don Taylor; airdate: December 15, 1971; *Guest Cast:* Edward G. Robinson (Abraham Goldman); Tony Roberts; Yaphet Kotto (Messiah); Ricky Powell (Mikey); Joseph Ruskin (Fanatic); John J. Fox (Santa Claus); Anne Taylor (Miss Moreti).

An old Jewish man, Abe Goldman, faces impending death from a terminal illness, as well as possible

eviction from the tenements. In response, his grandson Mikey goes out onto the street in search of the messiah: a looming black figure who can save his family.

**19B. “The Painted Mirror”** Written by Gene Kearney; From a short story by Donald Wandrei; Directed by Gene Kearney; airdate: December 15, 1971; *Guest Cast*: Zsa Zsa Gabor (Mrs. Moore); Arthur O’Connell (Mr. Frank Standish); Rosemary De Camp (Ellen Chase).

A kindly old thrift shop owner is forced to compromise his decency and his values when he becomes partners with an obnoxious, loud-mouthed woman. When his favorite customer brings in a painted mirror, which seems to be a portal to a prehistoric world, Mr. Standish realizes he may have a way to rid himself and the world of his cold-hearted associate.

**20A. “The Different Ones”** Written by Rod Serling; Directed by John Meredyth Lucas; airdate: December 29, 1971; *Guest Cast*: Dana Andrews (Mr. Koch); Monica Lewis (Official); Jon Korkes (Victor Koch); Dennis Rucker (Man); Peggy Webber (Woman); Mary Gregory (Second Woman).

Vic Koch, a 17-year-old boy who hides his deformed face from the world beneath a black hood, is urged by his father to seek a haven for people like himself. His father contacts the special urban problems office to report Vic’s deformity, and after first suggesting euthanasia (in accordance with the Federal Conformity Act of 1993), the government recommends a population exchange with the distant planet Boreon.

**20B. “Tell David”** Written by Gerald Sanford; From a story by Penelope Wallace; Directed by Jeff Corey; airdate: December 29, 1971; *Guest Cast*: Sandra Dee (Ann Bolt); Jared Martin (David Blessington/Tony Bolt); Jenny Sullivan (Pat Blessington); Jan Shutan (Jane Blessington); Francoise Ruggieri (Yvonne); Anne Randall (Julie); Chris Patrick (David Bolt).

On a rainy night, Ann Bolt loses her way and inadvertently stumbles into her own future: a world where her son David is full-grown and married, and Anne has committed suicide after the murder of her philandering husband, Tony.

**20C. “Lagoda’s Heads”** Written by Robert Bloch; From a short story by August Derleth; Directed by Jeannot Szwarc; airdate: December 29, 1971; *Guest Cast*: Tim Matheson (Henley); Patrick Macnee (British Officer); Brock Peters (Lagoda); Denise Nicholas (Kyro); Albert Popwell (Sgt. Ino); Zara Culla (Emba); Roger E. Mobley (Second Askari).

After committing a fellow native to sacrifice, a witch-doctor named Lagoda casts a spell on an American doctor and his companion. A British officer and the American’s concerned brother go to Lagoda for answers and find that his magic stems from a row of shrunken human heads.

**21A. “The Funeral”** Written by Richard Matheson; Directed by John Meredyth Lucas; airdate: January 5, 1972; *Guest Cast*: Joe Flynn (Morton Silklime); Werner Klemperer (Mr. Ludwig Asperg); Harvey Jason (Morrow); Charles Macaulay (The Count); Jack Laird (Ygor); Laara Lacey (Jenny); Leonidas D. Ossetynski (2nd Male Vampire); Diana Hale (Female Vampire); Jerry Summers (Bruce).

Mr. Asperg visits Mr. Silklime’s establishment to arrange a funeral service ... for himself! It seems he’s a vampire, and he’s very unhappy with the way his previous funeral, a catch-as-catch-can affair, was handled.

**21B. “The Tune in Dan’s Cafe”** Written by Gerald Sanford and Carrie Bateson; From a short story by Shamus Frazier; Directed by David Rawlins; airdate: January 5, 1972; *Guest Cast*: Pernell Roberts (Joe Belman); Sue Oliver (Kelly Belman); James Nusser (Dan); James Davidson (Roy); Brooke Mills (Red).

A bickering couple stops at a roadside diner where the jukebox will only play one tune: a song about a doomed love affair. The song continues to play, and for a time the past seems to be coming alive ... with a vengeance!

**21C. “Green Fingers”** Written by Rod Serling; From a short story by R.C. Cook; Directed by John Badham; airdate: January 5, 1972; *Guest Cast*: Cameron Mitchell (Mr. Michael J. Saunders); Elsa Lanchester (The Widow Bowen); Henry Hickox (Sheriff); Bill Quinn (Doctor); Larry Watson (First Deputy); Jeff Burton (Second Deputy); George Keymas (Crowley).

Construction tycoon Michael Saunders pressures the 77-year-old Widow Bowen to sell her estate so he can convert the land into an industrial factory. Bowen, a woman obsessed with gardening, warns Saunders that everything she plants *grows*, and after a vicious assassination attempt on Bowen’s life, the developer learns her assertion is truthful.

**22A. “Lindemann’s Catch”** Written by Rod Serling; Directed by Jeff Corey; airdate: January 12, 1972; *Guest Cast*: Stuart Whitman (Captain Lindemann); Jack Aranson (Nichols); John Alderson (Granger); Harry Townes (Suggs); Jim Boles (Bennett); Ed Bakey (Ollie); Matt Pelto (Phineas); Michael Stanwood (Charlie); Anabel Garth (Mermaid).

A lonely New England sailor catches a beautiful mermaid in his daily haul and longs to make her fully human. He seeks help first from a friendly physician and then a local magician called Suggs, who offers the lovelorn seaman a potion that he promises will transform the mermaid into a creature with two legs instead of a fin.

**22B. “A Feast of Blood”** Written by Stanford Whitmore; From a story by Dulcie Gray; Directed by Jeannot Szwarc; airdate: January 12, 1972; *Guest Cast*: Norman Lloyd (Henry); Sondra Locke (Sheila); Barry Bernard (Gippo); Cara Burgess (Girl); Gerald S. Peters (Chauffeur).

An obnoxious, rich man named Henry courts the haughty Sheila Gray even though she is in love with another man named John. Henry gives Sheila a rare gift: a jewelry-like brooch in the shape of a mouse (descended from a vampire bat). When Sheila spurns Henry’s advances, she discovers the brooch is not so easy to rid herself of.

**22C. “The Late Mr. Peddington”** Written by Jack Laird; From the short story by Frank Sisk; Directed by Jeff Corey; airdate: January 12, 1972; *Guest Cast*: Harry Morgan (Thaddeus Conway); Kim Hunter (Cora Peddington); Randy Quaid (John).

A woman shopping for an economical undertaker visits Thaddeus Conway’s establishment. The mortician listens patiently as Mrs. Peddington describes exactly the sort of funeral she plans for her penny-pinching, business-minded husband.

**23A. “The Miracle at Camafeo”** Written by Rod Serling; From a short story by C.B. Gilford; Directed by Ralph Senensky; airdate: January 19, 1972; *Guest Cast*: Harry Guardino (Mr. Rogan);

Julie Adams (Mrs. Melkur); Ray Danton (Joe Melkur).

An insurance fraud investigator pursues a claim to Camafeo, Costa Brava, where he believes another kind of fraud, against the kingdom of heaven, is about to be perpetrated by conman Joe Melkur. There is a sacred shrine in Camafeo where the blind, lame, and sick are cured by God, and it is there that Mr. Melkur, a man supposedly paralyzed after a traffic accident involving a bus, hopes to get away with his scam, and \$500,000.

**23B. “The Ghost of Sorworth Place”** Written by Alvin Sapinsley; From a story by Russell Kirk; Directed by Ralph Senensky; airdate: January 19, 1972; *Guest Cast:* Richard Kiley (Ralph Burke); Jill Ireland (Ms. Ann Loring); Mavis Neal (Mrs. Ducker); Patrick O’Moore (Mr. MacLeod); John D. Schofield (Alistair Loring).

An American traveler who has lost his way in rural Scotland unexpectedly finds Sorworth Place and meets the lovely widow Mrs. Loring there. She is terribly frightened that the ghost of her dead husband will return from the grave to kill her, and she asks the American to protect her. However, she also offers a dire warning to the lovestruck American: she is not capable of loving anything living.

**24A. “The Waiting Room”** Written by Rod Serling; Directed by Jeannot Szwarc; airdate: January 26, 1972; *Guest Cast:* Steve Forrest (Samuel Dictor); Albert Salmi (Joe Bristol); Jim Davis (Charlie McKinley); Lex Barker (Abe Bennett); Buddy Ebsen (Dr. Soames); Gilbert Roland (the Bartender).

A black-garbed gunfighter, Sam Dictor, joins the ranks of other so-called immortal outlaws in an out-of-the-way saloon. He soon finds that he, like his compatriots, has died and that he will be forced to relive the instant of his death again and again, for all eternity.

**24B. “Last Rites for a Dead Druid”** Written by Alvin Sapinsley; Directed by Jeannot Szwarc; airdate: January 26, 1972; *Guest Cast:* Bill Bixby (Bruce Terraday/Bruce the Black); Carol Lynley (Jenny Terraday); Donna Douglas (Mildred McVane); Ned Glass (Mr. Bernstein); Janya Brant (Marta).

In an out-of-the-way antique boutique, Jenny Terraday spots a rock statue which strangely resembles her husband Bruce. Jenny brings the statue home and Bruce is subsequently terrorized by the pre-Druid relic. After the statue urges Bruce to kill his wife, Bruce has a strange confrontation with the stone-faced objet d’art ... actually a trapped Satanic sorcerer called Bruce the Black.

**25A. “Deliveries in the Rear”** Written by Rod Serling; Directed by Jeff Corey; airdate: February 9, 1972; *Guest Cast:* Cornel Wilde (Doctor); Walter Burke (Jameson); Rosemary Forsythe (Barbara Wilde); Kent Smith (Bennett); Peter Brocco (Dr. Shockman).

At the beginning of the 1900s, an unscrupulous doctor needs cadavers for his medical school program, and so solicits the aid of some equally unscrupulous delivery people. Only much later does he find out exactly where his special cadavers are coming from.

**25B. “Stop Killing Me!”** Written by Jack Laird; From a short story by Hal Dresner; Directed by Jeannot Szwarc; airdate: February 9, 1972; *Guest Cast:* Geraldine Page (Mrs. Frances Churchin); James Gregory (Sgt. Stanley Bevelow).

An irritating jabbermouth goes to the police station and reports that her husband is threatening to kill her. In effect, her husband is causing her to “worry” herself to death, and the police sergeant, unhappy in his own marriage, thinks it’s a pretty clever scheme.

**25C. “Dead Weight”** Written by Jack Laird; From a short story by Jeffrey Scott; Directed by Tim Galfas; airdate: February 9, 1972; *Guest Cast:* Jack Albertson (Mr. Beaumont); Bobby Darin (Mr. Landau); James Metropole (Delivery Boy).

Armed robbers stage a bank heist which ends in murder, and one of the perpetrators, Mr. Landau, seeks help fleeing the country from an old timer named Mr. Beaumont. Landau has no idea, of course, that his final destination is not Argentina, but a dog food ingredient plant, in a crate to boot!

**26A. “I’ll Never Leave You—Ever”** Written by Jack Laird; From a short story by Rene Morris; Directed by Daniel Haller; airdate: February 16, 1972; *Guest Cast:* Lois Nettleton (Maura); John Saxon (Adam); Royal Dano (Owen).

A woman caring for her elderly, invalid husband conducts an affair with a handsome young man. Yearning to be free of her marital responsibilities, Maura visits a witch to help speed her sick old husband to the grave.

**26B. “There Aren’t Any More MacBanes”** Written by Alvin Sapinsley; From a short story by Stephen Hall; Directed by John Newland; airdate: February 16, 1972; *Guest Cast:* Joel Grey (Andrew); Howard Duff (Uncle Arthur); Mark Hamill (Frances).

Andrew’s uncle Arthur disapproves of his studies in the occult and black magic and threatens to disinherit the young man unless Andrew finds a respectable job in six months. Instead of complying, Andrew delves further into the world of black magic and conjures up a vengeful but strangely loyal creature capable of killing not only his uncle, but all of his friends as well!

**27A. “You Can’t Get Help Like That Anymore”** Written by Rod Serling; Directed by Jeff Corey; airdate: February 23, 1972; *Guest Cast:* Cloris Leachman (Mrs. Fulton); Broderick Crawford (Mr. Fulton); Lana Wood (Robot, Model 931); Henry Jones (Malcolm Hample); Pamela Shoop (Mrs. Foster); Christopher Law (Mr. Foster); Severn Darden (Dr. Kessler); A’lesha Lee (Receptionist); Roberta Carol Brahm (Damaged Maid).

Robot-Aids Inc. sells android helpers to assist in the smooth running of a modern household. While Mr. and Mrs. Foster scan the domestics department in search of some good help, a nastier human couple, the Fultons, treat their robot slaves with cruelty ... even though the machines show increasing signs of human emotions.

**27B. “The Sins of the Fathers”** Written by Halsted Welles; From the short story by Christianna Brand; Directed by Jeannot Szwarc; airdate: February 23, 1972; *Guest Cast:* Geraldine Page (Wife of the Sin-Eater); Richard Thomas (Boy); Michael Dunn (The Servant); Cyril Delerant (The Old Man); Alan Napier (The Man); Terene Pushman (Any Man); John Barclay (Another Man); Barbara Steele (The Widow).

The son of a “sin eater” is asked to go in his sick father’s place to a banquet for the dead. Served at this event is a feast containing the deceased’s worldly sins, and eating the meal results in everlasting

damnation for the consumer. The starving boy steals the feast and avoids the sins, only to discover that he has an even heartier banquet waiting for him at home.

**28A. “The Caterpillar”** Written by Rod Serling; From the short story “Boomerang” by Oscar Cook; Directed by Jeannot Szwarc; airdate: March 1, 1972; *Guest Cast*: Laurence Harvey (Stephen Macey); Joanna Pettet (Mrs. Warrick); John Williams (Mr. Warrick).

In remotest Borneo, a bored new arrival plans to kill his host, Mr. Warrick, so as to possess the elder gentleman’s lovely young wife. To this end, he plots to utilize a native insect called an earwig: a tiny natural nightmare which enters the human ear and burrows its way through the brain.

**28B. “Little Girl Lost”** Written by Stanford Whitmore; From a story by E.C. Tubb; Directed by Timothy Galfas; airdate: March 1, 1972; *Guest Cast*: William Windom (The Professor); Ed Nelson (Tom); Ivor Francis (Cottrell); John Lasell (Colonel Hawes).

Six months ago, little Jenny was killed by a hit-and-run driver, and now her father, a brilliant scientist working on fission with nonradioactive materials, lives under the delusion that she is still alive. Because they want the formula for his new work, the scientific community orders an injured armed forces officer to indulge Jenny’s father in his delusion, unaware that the mourning scientist is angry with the world, and looking for revenge.

**29A. “Satisfaction Guaranteed”** Written by Jack Laird; Directed by Jeannot Szwarc; airdate: March 22, 1972; *Guest Cast*: Victor Buono; Cathleen Cordell (Mrs. Mount); Marion Charles (Miss Walters); Leigh Christian (Miss Ransom); Eve Curtis (Miss Caraway); Cherie Franklin (Miss Blodgett).

A hard-to-please gentleman tries the patience of an employment agent as he seeks satisfaction in his choice for the perfect ... dinner.

**29B. “Smile Please”** Written and directed by Jack Laird; airdate: March 22, 1972; *Guest Cast*: Lindsay Wagner (Photographer); Cesare Danova (Vampire).

A tour guide promises a beautiful American tourist a photograph of an authentic vampire in the basement of a Gothic castle.

• *Third Season (1972–1973)*

**30. “The Return of the Sorcerer”** Written by Halsted Welles; From a story by Clark Ashton Smith; Directed by Jeannot Szwarc; airdate: September 24, 1972; *Guest Cast*: Vincent Price (Carnby); Bill Bixby (Evans); Patricia Sterling (Fern).

A translator and Arabic student discovers that his scholarly talents are desired by a mysterious sorcerer who has hopes of deciphering an ancient scroll which promises great power.

**31. “The Girl with the Hungry Eyes”** Written by Robert Malcolm Young; From a short story by Fritz Leiber; Directed by John Badham; airdate: October 1, 1972; *Guest Cast*: James Farentino (David Faulkner); Joanna Pettet (The Girl with the Hungry Eyes); John Astin (Munsch); Kip Niven (Harry); Bruce Powers (Man).

A photographer develops an obsession with a beautiful but strange model who warns him never to



follow her. The photographer ignores her warning, even as a series of murders occur in his neighborhood. He soon suspects that his model is actually a vampiric force which feeds on the desire of lonely men.

**32. “Rare Objects”** Written by Rod Serling; Directed by Jeannot Szwarc; airdate: October 22, 1972; *Guest Cast:* Mickey Rooney (Mr. August “Auggie” Kolodny); Raymond Glassey (Dr. Glennan); Fay Spain (Molly Mitchell); Rejis J. Curdic (Doctor); David Fresco (Blockman); Victor Sen Young (Butler); Ralph Adano (Tony).

After an Italian mob boss survives a hit in a fancy restaurant, he contemplates his retirement from such a dangerous lifestyle. He seeks help from a strange gentleman, Dr. Glennan, a collector extraordinaire who promises a life of comfort and safety ... with just a few restrictions.

**33. “Spectre in Tap Shoes”** Written by Gene Kearney; From a story by Jack Laird; Directed by Jeannot Szwarc; airdate: October 29, 1972; *Guest Cast:* Sandra Dee (Millicent/Marion); Dane Clark (Jason); Christopher Connelly (Sam); Russell Thorson (Dr. Coolidge); Michael Laird (Michael); Stuart Nisbet (Officer).

Murder and deceit are part of the game when a woman finds that her dead twin has returned from the grave to finger her murderer and save her estate.

**34. “You Can Come Up Now, Mrs. Millikan”** Written by Rod Serling; From a story by J. Wesley Rosenquist; Directed by John M. Badham; airdate: November 12, 1972; *Guest Cast:* Ozzie Nelson (Henry Millikan); Harriet Nelson (Helena Millikan); Roger Davis (George); Michael Lerner (Burgess); Don Keeper (Coolidge); Margaret Muse (Steinheim); Lew Brown (Stacy); Stuart Nisbet (Kimbrough).

An alchemist promises to turn common rock into noble gold, but his experiment fails and an explosion ensues. He and his forgetful wife then embark on a new experiment, one that involves his wife’s death and her eventual ... but ill-timed ... return from the grave.

**35. “The Other Way Out”** Written and directed by Gene Kearney; From a story by Kurt Van Elting; airdate: November 19, 1972; *Guest Cast:* Ross Martin (Bradley Meredith); Burl Ives (Blackmailer); Peggy Feury (Estelle); Jack Collins (Potter); Elizabeth Thompson (Flannagan); Paule Micale (Waiter); Adam Weed (Sonny).

On his return from a vacation with his wife, businessman Bradley Meredith is taunted by a blackmailer with an intimate knowledge of a scandalous crime from his past. En route to deliver the blackmail money, the desperate Meredith wrecks his car and heads for a nearby country home which, in a twist worthy of *The Virgin Spring*, turns out to be the abode of his nemesis.

**36. “Fright Night”** Written by Robert Malcolm Young; From a story by Kurt Van Elting; Directed by Jeff Corey; airdate: December 10, 1972; *Guest Cast:* Stuart Whitman (Tom Ogilvy); Barbara Anderson (Leona Ogilvy); Ellen Corby (Miss Patterson); Alan Napier (Cousin Zaccariah).

A couple moves into an old home and is warned by the housekeeper not to move or open a trunk hidden in the attic.

**37. “Finnegan’s Flight”** Written by Rod Serling; Directed by Gene Kearney; airdate: December 17, 1972; *Guest Cast*: Burgess Meredith (Finnegan); Cameron Mitchell (Tuttle); Barry Sullivan (Dr. Simsich); Kenneth Toby (Warden); Dort Clark (Inmate).

A small-time thief sentenced to life in jail and suffering from claustrophobia resorts to hypnosis to escape his feelings of terror and entrapment. Unfortunately, the thief is a man highly susceptible to hypnotic suggestion, and things soon get out of hand.

**38. “She’ll Be Company for You”** Written by David Rayfield; From a story by Andrea Newman; Directed by Gerald Perry Finnerman; airdate: December 24, 1972; *Guest Cast*: Leonard Nimoy (Henry Auden); Lorraine Gary (Barbara); Jack Oakie (Willie); Kathryn Hays (June).

A cat is the tool of supernatural justice in this tale, which finds a young widower relieved at the death of his long-sick wife. His wife’s best friend deplores his attitude and gives him the cat as a gift ... and soon the widower’s happiness has disappeared along with his relief.

**39. “The Ring with the Red Velvet Ropes”** Written by Robert Malcolm Young; From a short story by Edward D. Hoch; Directed by Jeannot Szwarc; airdate: January 7, 1973; *Guest Cast*: Gary Lockwood (Jim Figg); Joan Van Ark (Sandra Blanco); Chuck Connors (Roderick Blanco); Ralph Menza (Max); Charles Davis (Hayes); Ji-Tu Cumbuka (Big Dan Anger); James Bacon (2nd Reporter); Frankie Van (Referee).

Jim Figg, the new heavyweight boxing champion, is visited by the ghost of the man he just defeated, Big Dan Anger. After he showers, the new champ is transported miraculously to the home of another former champion named Roderick Blanco—a man who suggests a new boxing match, “winner take all.”

**40. “Something in the Woodwork”** Written by Rod Serling; From a story by R. Chetwynd-Hayes; Directed by Ed Abrams; airdate: January 14, 1973; *Guest Cast*: Leif Erickson (Charlie); Geraldine Page; Barbara Rhodes (Julie); Paul Henkins (Joe).

An aging old woman fighting alcoholism comes to believe that a ghost is living in her newly purchased home. As she gets to know the spirit in her attic, she comes to believe that the apparition may be useful in killing her former husband, who suffers from a coronary condition.

**41. “Death on a Barge”** Written by Halsted Welles; From a story by Everil Worrell; Directed by Leonard Nimoy; airdate: March 4, 1973; *Guest Cast*: Lesley Ann Warren (Hyacinth); Lou Antonio (Jake); Robert Pratt (Ron); Brooke Bundy (Phyllis); Jim Bokes (father); Arthur Spain (Coastguard).

Beautiful but remote Hyacinth lives day-to-day on an aging barge and never comes out on deck in the daytime. One night, she catches the eye of a lovestruck, lonely young man, but she refuses to let him come aboard the barge to learn her secret. This strange love story goes tragically wrong when a friend of the young man sneaks aboard the barge and discovers that the lovely Hyacinth is a vampire.

**42. “Whisper”** Written by David Rayfield; From a short story by Martin Waddell; Directed by Jeannot Szwarc; airdate: May 13, 1973; *Guest Cast*: Dean Stockwell (Charlie Evans); Sally Field (Irene Evans); Kent Smith (Dr. Kennaway).

A beautiful girl prone to possession by wandering spirits fights a life-and-death struggle to keep a hold on her identity. Her husband, Charlie, reports that there is an openness to his Irene, a vacancy in her soul that can sometimes be filled by other spirits, but in this case he worries that Irene may be misused by an insistent spirit endlessly in search of a mysterious summer house.

**43. “The Doll of Death”** Written by Jack Guss; From a story by Vivian Meik; Directed by John M. Badham; airdates: May 20, 1973; *Guest Cast:* Susan Strasberg (Sheila); Alejandro Rey (Raphael); Barry Atwater (Brandon); Murray Matheson (Dr. Strang); Henry Brandon (Bereker); Jean Durand (Andrew).

A voodoo doll is the terrifying *modus operandi* through which a spurned Englishman plans to take revenge. The object of his hatred is his faithless fiancée, who has run off with a younger lover.

**44A. “Hatred Unto Death”** Written by Halsted Welles; From a story by Milton Geiger; Directed by Gerald Perry Finnerman; airdates: May 27, 1973; *Guest Cast:* Steve Forrest (Grant Wilson); Dina Merrill (Ruth Wilson); George Barrows (N’gi); Fernando Lamas.

On safari, a man captures a bizarre, highly intelligent, and volatile gorilla. After spending some time up close with the unusual beast, the adventurer comes to believe that he and the gorilla may share a long history together: a history that includes reincarnation, and a hatred for one another which spans time.

**44B. “How to Cure the Common Vampire”** Written and directed by Jack Laird; airdates: May 27, 1973; *Guest Cast:* Richard Deacon, Johnny Brown.

The question of the day for two vampire hunters is this: What is the best way to kill a bloodsucker?

## *The Sixth Sense* (1972)

### CRITICAL RECEPTION

“Most of the entries were traditional murder mysteries with rather haphazardly placed ESP gimmicks. The series was a flop.”—Gary Gerani and Paul Schulman, *Fantastic Television*, 1977, page 165.

“A truly abysmal ESP show ... made even more unbearable after being edited down to one-half hour.”—Jim Mires, *Epi-Log Magazine*, Issue #3: “*Night Gallery/The Sixth Sense*, October 1990, page 42.

“*The Sixth Sense* was a valiant attempt at a quality series dealing with the supernatural. Story editor D.C. Fontana (who contributed much of the originality, charm and characterization to the *Star Trek* TV series) applied her considerable skills to the show.”—Allan Asherman, *Starblazer*, Volume #1, Number 4, January 1985, page 25.

“a potentially adult topic was given a juvenile perspective ... Dr. Michael Rhodes, who had ESP ... went helter skelter into preternatural situations. Nor did he ever probe the people it affected or their emotions—only the occult events themselves. Thus, while the results were interesting, they were not what they could have been.”—Jeff Rovin, *The Great Television Series*, A.S. Barnes & Company, 1977, Cranbury NJ, page 137.

### FORMAT

Dr. Michael Rhodes is an impossibly handsome professor employed at a prestigious California university where computers have catalogued thousands of legitimate cases involving psychic experiences. Dr. Michael Rhodes (Gary Collins) is a “sensitive” himself, capable of receiving visions and insights related to any case he investigates. With the part-time (Episodes 1-7) help of his assistant, Nancy Murphy (Catherine Ferrar), Rhodes seeks to shed “cold, scientific objectivity” on the study of ESP, and aid those troubled people (usually lovely young ladies) who come to him seeking help in resolving traumatic psychic or near-psychic experiences. In the process, ESP-related ideas such as automatic writing (“I Do Not Belong to the Human World”), premonitions (“Through a Flame, Darkly”), biological imposition (“The Man Who Died at Three and Nine”), ESP impressions (“The House that Cried Murder”), and astral projection (“Once Upon a Chilling”) are thoroughly explored.

By the end of *The Sixth Sense*’s first season, Nancy Murphy was no longer a regular character. During the first and second season of *The Sixth Sense*, Dr. Rhodes was sometimes assisted by his friend on the police force, Sgt. “Woody” (Percy Rodrigues).

### HISTORY

*The Sixth Sense* was created by Anthony Lawrence, a talented TV and movie writer who had contributed stories for the hospital drama *Ben Casey* (1961-66), and two notable episodes of *The Outer Limits* (1963-65): “The Man Who Was Never Born” (starring Martin Landau) and “The Children of Spider County.” In addition to Lawrence’s presence, the TV series was guided and developed

throughout its 25 episode run by producer Stan Shpetner. The original idea for *The Sixth Sense* came out of a project called *Sweet, Sweet Rachel* (1971), a very successful TV movie which Anthony Lawrence had written and Shpetner had produced. Starring Alex Dreier (as Dr. Lucas Darrow), the telefilm aired on October 2, 1971, and concerned an ESP/parapsychology expert who came to the aid of Stefanie Powers (as Rachel Stanton) and two other women desperate to fight off a telepathic assassin. The 90-minute TV venture also starred John Hillerman, Mark Tapscott, and Louise Latham, who, along with Powers, later returned as guest stars on *The Sixth Sense* series.

In addition to his work on *The Sixth Sense*, Lawrence was a contributor to NBC's *Ghost Story/Circle of Fear* in 1972 ("At the Cradle Foot") and he preferred the anthology format to the regular series formula of shows such as his own *The Sixth Sense*:

You're not stuck with running characters, and you have a chance to do something a little more creative. There are very few people who have afforded me the luxury to write what I wanted, in the way I wanted to write it.<sup>1</sup>

Though Lawrence contributed the first two episodes of the new ABC series ("I Do Not Belong to the Human World" and "The Heart That Wouldn't Stay Buried"), he only contributed story ideas ("Face of Ice") for *The Sixth Sense* as it continued its brief network run. Instead, producer Shpetner took over the reigns, and two well-known, highly-regarded genre story editors stepped in: Harlan Ellison and Dorothy Fontana. For a time, these impressive talents worked with successful TV writers such as Gene Coon, Don Ingalls, and Robert Collins to craft interesting stories, but they also left the series early in its hastily ordered, hastily prepared first season run (which began airing in January of 1972—just three months after the ratings success of the back-door pilot *Sweet, Sweet Rachel*). As Ellison once explained, it was never a match made in heaven:

I sold my soul to Universal Studios, then-president Lew Wasserman, a producer named Stan Shpetner, a primetime TV series called *The Sixth Sense* ... I departed in a moment of greed and weakness from eleven years as a film and television writer to join the enemy on the other side of the desk ... I became a story editor.<sup>2</sup>

By Christmas of 1971, before the first episode of *The Sixth Sense* had even aired, Ellison had turned in his resignation. With all this behind-the-scenes shuffling, there was also a shift in on-camera personnel on the set of *The Sixth Sense*. Alex Dreier and his character, Dr. Lucas Darrow, were replaced for the weekly series by the younger and far more handsome actor, Gary Collins, as a new ESP specialist named Dr. Michael Rhodes. Collins was no stranger to television work when he came to *The Sixth Sense*. He had already starred in *The Wackiest Ship in the Army* (1965-66) as Lieutenant Rip Riddle and in the ABC series *The Ironhorse* (1966-68) as Dave Tarrant. In addition to his good looks and solid acting chops, Gary Collins also brought an infectious enthusiasm to *The Sixth Sense*. He had studied up on ESP to prepare for the role of Rhodes, and, at least for publicity's sake, seemed to buy into the incredible series plots his character came to be involved in. As he told *Senior Scholastic*:

Every thought we have produces an electrical impulse. We've learned to vocalize our needs and desires. But we could also make them known by sending *impulses* to another person.... Many people aren't receptive because they don't trust their instincts. Society has conditioned us to think that we *should* think rather than following our basic instincts. Conditioned responses get in

the way.<sup>3</sup>

With Collins entrenched as the new, sympathetic series lead, ABC announced production of *The Sixth Sense* on November 17, 1971. Hailed as a “one hour ... series exploring extra sensory perception,”<sup>4</sup> it was scheduled to air Saturday nights at 10:00 PM. Its format was aptly described by *The Sixth Sense* press-kit in this manner:

You enter a strange room for the first time, yet you know you’ve been there before. You dream about an event that happens some days later.... A coincidence? Maybe. But more than likely, it’s extrasensory perception, a sixth sense that many scientists believe we all possess, but rarely use.<sup>5</sup>

Much of the series would follow this unusual template, as Dr. Rhodes would encounter people (usually a beautiful woman) who had experienced a psychic vision that required his insight and explanation. The “sixth sense,” ESP, was taken as almost a given, and Rhodes would frequently lecture about telepathy and the like, citing Sigmund Freud and other prominent researchers who felt that ESP was a valid, and very real, human gift. As Rhodes declared in one episode (“Once Upon a Chilling”), “true science cannot deny the existence of things just because they cannot be weighed or measured.” That statement could have been the series mantra, as it was repeated frequently throughout *The Sixth Sense*.

As *The Sixth Sense* began its run in the winter of 1972, it faced competition from CBS’s *Mission: Impossible* (1966-73), and NBC’s detective drama, *Banyon* (1972-73). Despite difficulties, *The Sixth Sense* survived, in no small part due to the directing efforts of Richard Donner, John Badham, and Jeff Corey, all veterans of either Rod Serling’s *The Night Gallery* or *The Twilight Zone*, and an array of impressive guest stars which included John Saxon (“Lady, Lady, Take My Life”), William Shatner (“Can a Dead Man Strike from the Grave?”), Joseph Campanella (“The Man Who Died at Three and Nine”), Lee Majors (“With This Ring, I Thee Kill”), Michael Murphy (“The Heart That Wouldn’t Stay Buried”), Steve Forrest (“Echo of a Distant Scream”), Henry Silva (“The Shadow in the Well”), Mariette Hartley (“Eye of the Haunted”), Tiffany Bolling (“Witch, Witch Burning Bright”), and Carol Lynley (“The House That Cried Murder”).

For the fall of 1972, *The Sixth Sense* was renewed for an additional 13 episodes. One of the primary selling points of the series’ sophomore season was a rare TV guest-star appearance by legendary movie star Joan Crawford (*Strait Jacket* [1968], *Trog* [1970]). On *The Sixth Sense*, the great screen idol played a confused, frightened woman named Joan in “Dear Joan: We’re Going to Scare You to Death,” and Crawford described the part as “the kind of emotional, gutsy role I can sink my teeth into.”<sup>6</sup>

The guest-star list remained equally strong during the abbreviated second season, with Patty Duke and Robert Foxworth starring in “With Affection, Jack the Ripper,” Jeanette Nolan showing up in “Witness Within,” Sandra Dee headlining in “Through a Flame, Darkly,” and a young Scott Glenn appearing in “And Scream by the Light of the Moon.” On the directing front, the auteur of *One Step Beyond*, John Newland, joined the proceedings, while Ed Waters served as story editor.

Despite the appeal of guest stars such as Crawford, and the eerie “psychic visions” featured in each episode, *The Sixth Sense* tended towards repetition as it flew through its second run. Due to lower-than-expected ratings, the series was canceled by ABC on November 14, 1972.<sup>7</sup> Gary Collins moved on almost immediately to the lead role of George Adamson in *Born Free* (1974), an NBC series also

starring *Star Trek: The Next Generation's* (1987-94) Diana Muldaur. He returned briefly to the world of science fiction/horror in 1980 as an American astronaut in the low budget film *Hangar 18*. Ironically, his co-star was *Kolchak: The Night Stalker* lead Darren McGavin. As for *The Sixth Sense*, it would soon suffer a fate far worse than mere cancellation.

In 1974, Universal Studios decided that *Rod Serling's Night Gallery* and *The Sixth Sense* did not feature enough episodes to be successfully stripped in syndication (i.e., shown five days a week). Faced with the possibility that no rerun money could be made from these high-profile, reasonably expensive series, Universal thought of a creative, but highly destructive trick. It rehired *Night Gallery* host Rod Serling (reportedly at a very high price) to record brand new *Night Gallery*-like introductions to *The Sixth Sense* episode roster; introductions which (through the presence of Serling and newly painted *Sixth Sense* portraits) suggested that the ESP series was actually a legitimate part of *The Night Gallery*. Even worse, *The Sixth Sense* was stripped of its own opening credits and theme music, and cut down to a half-hour. Thus *Night Gallery* could be syndicated with 25 additional (*Sixth Sense*) half hours, and successfully stripped to local affiliates in search of network programming.

Since *Night Gallery* and *The Sixth Sense* featured many of the same actors (Carol Lynley, Jeanette Nolan, Susan Strasberg, John Saxon, and others) as well as many of the same directors (Corey and Badham), the two shows were not all that different in appearance and, to the eyes of Universal at least, could easily be "blended." This practice, which resulted in *The Sixth Sense* losing a full 50 percent of its dramatic narrative, effectively killed the Anthony Lawrence series for future generations. At a half-hour, the Dr. Rhodes series simply made little or no sense, and was thus maligned by viewers who felt the show was incomprehensible. Since 1974, *The Sixth Sense* has existed in this corrupted, half-hour state, with half of its footage missing in action. It is still run in this desecrated fashion as part of *The Night Gallery* on the Sci-Fi Channel.

Despite this inglorious fate, *The Sixth Sense* seems to have inspired at least some interest as the world headed towards the year 2000. A big-budget motion picture entitled *The Sixth Sense*, about ... you guessed it ... psychic powers, was released to great reviews and big box office in late July of 1999. Though the movie (starring Bruce Willis as a Rhodes-like psychologist ... with a twist) is in no way a straight reiteration of the Anthony Lawrence 1972 TV series, it is a similarly named, similarly themed exploration of ESP. In this case, the caring psychologist helps a little boy who can "see dead people" (and whispers a lot) to understand how to use his psychic abilities.

### CRITICAL COMMENTARY

*The Sixth Sense* has taken its share of brickbats from critics, viewers, and especially fans of *Rod Serling's Night Gallery*, but it is fair to state that it has never really had a fair hearing in regards to its quality (or lack thereof). In point of fact, *The Sixth Sense* has only been seen in its original, uncorrupted state twice (if one includes network reruns in 72-73). Since 1974, it has been a thoroughly corrupted work: chopped down mercilessly from 60 minutes to 30, and run as part of the aforementioned *Night Gallery* syndication package. Worse, with increased commercial time necessary in the 1990s, the series has been pared down even further on the Sci-Fi Channel, and most *Sixth Sense* episodes seen today are broadcast with almost three-fourths of their running time missing in action! All of this missing footage results in some very confusing stories ... stories that have been openly disdained by those who don't realize that they are now seeing but an abbreviated corruption of an already shortened corruption. For instance, the recut *The Sixth Sense*, at its running time of under 30 minutes, often fails to introduce crucial characters. Worse, important deductions about characters and

actions are made based on plot-points that are deleted, and thus no longer dramatized. In one egregious example of this crazy cutting, an important character is murdered, and the audience never sees him die (“I Do Not Belong to the Human World”) ... though he is referred to as “dead” immediately after a scene in which he is very much alive!

Universal’s decision to massacre this series is a bad one that has effectively destroyed any possibility that the series might develop a cult following or fan base. How good would *Star Trek* look and how well would it be remembered today if it had also been hacked up this way for syndication? It is clear then that *The Sixth Sense* has really suffered a great deal, through not fault of its own. People who do not like it are really just picking over scraps, and many of these episodes simply make little sense at a half-hour length. Still, surprisingly, the show is not nearly so terrible as many have suggested, even hacked up and stitched together.

What can be garnered about *The Sixth Sense* is that, even in its full form, it was a terribly repetitive TV series. Dr. Rhodes was always being brought in on some important case that involved somebody special to him, or in some way related to him. Bonnie (Pamela Franklin) in “I Did Not Mean to Slay Thee” was a favorite student. Laura Anders (Susan Strasberg) in “Once Upon a Chilling” was the ex-student of a favorite colleague. Terri Parker (Mariette Hartley) in “Eye of the Haunted” was his girlfriend’s sister. Rhodes’ uncle (Harry Townes) needed help in “Witch, Witch Burning Bright.” A college buddy (William Jordan) was in danger in “Five Widows Weeping.” A college instructor (Stacy Harris) required assistance in “With This Ring, I Thee Kill,” and so on, ad nauseam. In fact, so many friends and neighbors were involved with murders and psychic phenomena that *The Sixth Sense* became rather hard-to-swallow, instead of believable and provocative. Call it the *Murder, She Wrote* principle. In that CBS series, Jessica Fletcher’s family members were involved in murder after murder, week after week, for more than seven years until the format finally teetered on parody. *The Sixth Sense* never crossed the line into camp, but it did not exactly manage to suspend disbelief either.

Rhodes never once encountered a case that wasn’t psychic, that didn’t involve “the sixth sense,” and so the series became, in the end, totally absurd. In the world of *The Sixth Sense*, people had psychic visions as regularly as real people eat a meal or use a restroom. That these people all knew Rhodes, and were thus part of a small, location-specific circle, made the series even less believable.

Another problem on *The Sixth Sense* was characterization. Dr. Rhodes inevitably became involved with beautiful, young women who were experiencing psychic “problems.” Virtually all of them were in the same age range (25-35), and they were all the same in demeanor and attitude as well: innocent, frail women who needed to be protected, comforted, and guided by the more knowledgeable Dr. Rhodes. Pamela Franklin (“I Did Not Mean to Slay Thee”), June Allyson (“Witness Within”), Mary Ann Mobley (“Shadow in the Well” and “Five Widows Weeping”), Stefanie Powers (“Echo of a Distant Scream”), Tisha Sterling (“Lady, Lady, Take My Life”), Lucie Arnaz (“With This Ring, I Thee Kill”), Anne Archer (“Can a Dead Man Strike from Beyond the Grave?”), Tiffany Bolling (“Witch, Witch Burning Bright”), Carol Lynley (“The House That Cried Murder”), and Susan Strasberg (“Once Upon a Chilling”) all played essentially the same role reinterpreted again and again. Though they were all beautiful, they were also unremittingly bland, and all apparently cut from the same (dull) mold.

As for Dr. Rhodes, he was a bit of an albatross for the series too. Though well-played by the sincere Gary Collins, an underrated performer, the character is himself difficult to identify with because he is seemingly without any flaws or blemishes. He is gorgeous; he wears great clothes (usually



turtlenecks), he is infinitely supportive and insightful ... yet macho enough to match fists with any number of antagonists when it comes down to it. The bottom line is that Rhodes was so perfect in his patience, his appearance, and his demeanor (even in the face of constant criticism) that one never really felt he was in serious jeopardy or distress. The psychic powers he wielded only tended to make him appear more “superhuman,” and thus more remote as well. How did Rhodes feel about the people who were constantly disparaging his life’s work by calling it “hocus-pocus” and such? He commented several times that such remarks were an “occupational hazard,” but the most defensive he ever got was with surly guest star Steve Forrest in “Echo of a Distant Scream,” and even then he just raised his voice and acted a bit snippier than usual.

Adding to the problem, the audience knew virtually nothing of Rhodes as a man. His childhood was surely an interesting time, considering that his “rare sensitivity” was never addressed. Though he was seen with a (soon-to-be murdered) girlfriend in “Eye of the Haunted,” and attempting to hook up with stewardess Sharon Gless in “Flying Sepulcher of Death,” his personal life was also virtually unexamined. Rhodes was a stolid hero all right, but he lacked the common touches that would have made him seem real (like the eccentric Darren McGavin in *Kolchak: The Night Stalker*). Collins did superlative work, but he was undermined by a poorly conceived, underexamined character. Catherine Ferrar’s short-lived character Nancy was very much the same thing: a bland person with no distinct tics or discernible flourishes. Of course, if these flourishes did exist, there would be no way to prove it today since the episodes are so badly mangled.

Still, *The Sixth Sense* deserves some mention in the pantheon of modern horror programs because it was the first network series, even predating *Kolchak*, to throw a regular character into a series of adventures that are horror-based (featuring poltergeists; the spirit of Jack the Ripper; ghosts, etc.). *The Sixth Sense* was thus a pioneer, and as such it deserved better treatment from Universal than to be hacked to ribbons. Even today, in its edited form, much of *The Sixth Sense*’s imagery retains its terrifying nature. In “The Heart That Wouldn’t Stay Buried,” a man is attacked by a statue of a big-beaked, malevolent-looking bird. It may sound like a ridiculous vision, but it is a way out, freaky moment, reminiscent of a drug-induced altered state, when that oddball bird comes to life, flapping its bulky iron wings, its head rotating back and forth like some malevolent, animated gargoyle. Amazingly, this very image is repeated verbatim in the current horror hit, Jan De Bont’s remake of *The Haunting*. Since it was not a scene included in the original picture, one has to wonder if *The Sixth Sense* was the inspiration for it.

In regards to this, and other horrific moments, *The Sixth Sense* never failed to be interesting in a visual sense. In “Witness Within,” jump-cuts, slow-motion photography, and a nice, eerie blending of shadow, light, and distortion lenses made a nocturnal fantasy attacker nearly visceral. Likewise, in “Once Upon a Chilling,” a man’s spirit was projected out of his cryogenic deep freeze chamber, and the face of this specter was coated in dripping, cracked ice—a ghoulish image clearly intended to terrify rather than to inform. And, in “Five Widows Weeping,” Mary Ann Mobley’s psychic vision of danger dumped her (and the audience) into a hellish red hallway surrounded by pale zombie pallbearers who were carrying her dead husband’s casket. When Mobley swiveled to escape these undead creatures, she was then confronted with five veiled widows dressed all in black: silent, unseen watchers pointing to her with a chilling ferocity. In these moments, the horror of *The Sixth Sense* was tangible.

Thematically, *The Sixth Sense* was probably at its best near the start of its short TV life, when Harlan

Ellison and D.C. Fontana were working as story editors and insuring a high degree of quality. The repetitive stories had not yet reduced psychic phenomena to the level of the mundane, and the individual episodes were filled with interesting ideas. In “Lady, Lady, Take My Life,” Dr. Rhodes was confronted with a “cathexis,” a network of dangerous psychics who, when joined together in a hive mind, could kill with their thoughts. The story really became involving when the group determined that it had the moral right and obligation to decide who should live and die, becoming, in the words of Rhodes, a “psychic lynch mob.” It may be an old idea (i.e., absolute power corrupts absolutely), but it was well-executed, and it had a moral center amidst the horror.

Other early stories were almost as interesting. In “Can a Dead Man Strike From Beyond the Grave?” guest star William Shatner played a jealous husband being forced to relive a murder committed by his equally jealous grandfather. In Shatner’s psychic vision, Rhodes and his wife (Anne Archer) became the Victorian Age adulterers who his grandfather had shot dead years earlier. The story was clever because every (logical) step of Rhodes’ investigation was misconstrued as part of an illicit affair, leading Shatner (in a wonderfully bitchy performance) further and further to the edge of sanity. Incidentally, the story was also a mini-*Star Trek* reunion, as it was written by *Trek* producer Gene Coon, edited by *Trek* contributors Fontana and Ellison, and starring Shatner—Captain Kirk himself.

Also deserving of praise was “With this Ring, I Thee Kill,” a story in which an aged and reclusive movie star, Clay Ross, utilized a psychic/hypnotic power to lure Lucie Arnaz into marriage with him and simultaneously broadcast the false image that he was young, studly Lee Majors (*The Six Million Dollar Man* [1974-78]) instead of a lecherous old monster. Particularly clever was the manner in which the episode reflected the play *Faust*, which also happened to be actor Clay’s first silent motion picture, filmed in 1926. Worthy of recognition as well were “The House That Cried Murder,” in which elements *The Pit and the Pendulum*, *The Raven*, *The Tell-Tale Heart*, *The Premature Burial*, and other Edgar Allan Poe stories were projected as disturbing psychic visions, and “Flying Sepulcher of Death,” a pseudo-“Nightmare at 20,000 Feet” with Rhodes trapped aboard a malfunctioning jet airliner.

Sadly, the remainder of *The Sixth Sense* episode roster was far less inspired. Although Satanism (“Whisper of Evil”), organ transplants (“Eyes That Would Not Die”), reincarnation (“Witch, Witch Burning Bright”) and even telepathic assassination (“The Man Who Died at Three and Nine”) enlivened various mediocre installments, the series as a whole really was a psychic *Murder, She Wrote*, with Rhodes frequently pinpointing a murderer in the final act only to have that murderer (improbably) confess his crime, and then (usually) die in the same manner he used to kill his victims. The full-breadth of ESP was not really explored by *The Sixth Sense*, because each story connected psychic power to crimes like murder, kidnapping, robbery, etc. ESP’s ability to be a helpful tool in and of itself was rarely touched on, except in John Newland’s unusual duo “Through a Flame, Darkly” and “Dear Joan: We Are Going to Scare You to Death,” stories which played more like colorized *One Step Beyond* stories than episodes of *The Sixth Sense*.

Since Universal has effectively butchered *The Sixth Sense*, it is impossible to judge if the series is really a good, bad, or merely mediocre one. Nobody has seen the series in its original format in over a quarter century, and that is truly a shame. Though what’s left isn’t always good, it is, for the most part, interesting enough to merit some serious debate. Lesser shows have generated considerable fandom, so why not *The Sixth Sense*? Though it reduces the mysteries of ESP to the mundane and is saddled with a repetitive format, it was also around quite *early* in horror TV history. And it worked

diligently in its attempts to terrify, a noble effort for any genre TV series. Though it is highly unlikely at this point, it would certainly be nice if Universal would repair *The Sixth Sense* and allow Columbia House to offer it on sell-through video in its original, uncorrupted format. History, and the series itself, would be well served by a restoration effort, even if it only serves to prove, ultimately, that *The Sixth Sense* is nonsense.

## CAST AND CREDITS:

*Cast:* Gary Collins (Dr. Michael Rhodes); *First Season:* Catherine Ferrar (Nancy Murphy).

*Credits:* *Created by:* Anthony Lawrence. *Developed and Produced by:* Stan Shpetner. *Executive Story Consultant:* Anthony Lawrence. *Associate Producer:* Robert F. O'Neill. *Story Editors (first season):* Harlan Ellison, D.C. Fontana. *Story Editor (second season):* Ed Waters. *Theme:* David Shire. *Director of Photography:* Enzo A. Martinelli. *Art Directors:* Arch Bacon, William Tuntke. *Set Decorators:* Hal Gausman, Leonard Mazzola. *Assistant Directors:* George Bisk, Thomas Blank, James Fargo, William Hole, Kenny Williams. *Unit Manager:* Frank Losee. *Film Editors:* Bud Hoffman, James Caylor. *Sound:* Edwin S. Hall. *Editing Supervision:* Richard Belding. *Music:* Billy Goldenberg, Bob Prince. *Music Supervision:* Hal Mooney. *Costumes:* Grady Hunt. *Titles and Optical:* Universal Title. In Technicolor.

## EPISODE GUIDE

### • *First Season (1972)*

**1. "I Do Not Belong to the Human World"** Written by Anthony Lawrence; Directed by Alf Kjellin; airdate: January 15, 1972; *Guest Cast:* Belinda Montgomery (Tina Morris); James McMullan (Pete); Kip Niven (Randy Blake); Bert Freed (Professor Calvin Blake); John Milford (Detective Sgt. Crowell); Christina Crawford (Betty Blake); Paul Bryar (Fire Captain).

Tina Morris has persistent visions of her brother Randy, a soldier presumed killed in action in Vietnam. She receives a telepathic message from Randy in Chinese by "automatic writing," a psychic phenomenon in which one receives thought impulses and transcribes them while in a trancelike state. Tina seeks the help of Dr. Rhodes, who believes that Randy may still be alive, and seeking escape from a P.O.W. camp. Unfortunately, somebody close to Randy wants to keep his location a secret, and will use any means, including arson and murder, to hide the truth from Dr. Rhodes.

**2. "The Heart That Wouldn't Stay Buried"** Written by Anthony Lawrence; Directed by Barry Shear; airdate: January 22, 1972; *Guest Cast:* Leif Erickson (Dr. Phillip Ford); Michael Murphy (David); Laraine Day (Marian); Jessica Walter (Jordana Theland); Gene Tyburn (Joseph Ford); Jo DeWinter (Nurse); Susan Reller (Student).

At a routine lecture, Dr. Rhodes is presented with a scalpel which introduces him to a complex, psychic mystery. A dying neurosurgeon believes that his daughter-in-law, Jordana, is killing him with a psychic "tumor" just like she attacked his son Joseph. In fact, Joseph has been subjected to an ongoing brutal ESP attack from an unidentified assailant ... an assailant who has a familiarity with the ESP theories of Sigmund Freud.

**3. "Lady, Lady, Take My Life"** Written by Robert Collins; Directed by John Badham; airdate:

January 29, 1972; *Guest Cast*: John Saxon (Dr. Harry Auden); Alf Kjellin (Carl Rintels); Tisha Sterling (Annette Gordon); James McEachin (Ritchie Blair); Than Wyenn (Dr. Abishi); Walter Brooke (Walker); Morgan Jones (Heavy Featured Man); Barbara George (Girl); John Schubecki (TV commentator); Suzanne Cohane (Blond).

Shortly after the administrator of a prominent scientific institute terminates an experimental mental telepathy program, he mysteriously drops dead. Dr. Rhodes is brought in by his friend Annette to investigate the telepathy project, in which a group of men and women are attempting to communicate by ESP with an astronaut in orbit around the moon. Rhodes soon suspects that a dangerous “cathexis,” a powerful psychic web made up of the group’s selective will and one stronger than its individual members, may be responsible for murder.

**4. “The House That Cried Murder”** Written by Robert Hammer; Directed by Richard Donner; airdate: February 5, 1972; *Guest Cast*: Carol Lynley (Gail Sumner); Larry Linville (Roger Carver); Robert Yuro (Frank Orley); Corinne Camacho (Anne Carver); Jim Antonio (Tom Walker); Kathleen King (Frances Dahlgren); Patricia Mickey (Janet Lewis); William Bryant (Detective Neal Jensen).

A young woman who has just moved into the estate of the late Frances Dahlgren imagines herself drowning in a sinking car. She also witnesses a “psychic” murderer in her bathroom, and suspects that her new home is responsible for the ESP impression. Dr. Rhodes searches for answers and discovers that there were two deaths nearby ... deaths that were associated with the works of Edgar Allan Poe.

**5. “The Man Who Died at Three and Nine”** Written by Don Ingalls; Directed by Robert Day and Alf Kjellin; airdate: February 12, 1972; *Guest Cast*: Joseph Campanella (Paul Crowley); Simon Scott (Secretary Stuart Forbes); Susan Howard (Vita Forbes); Aly Wassil (Hari Narada); Chandrika (Woman).

A prominent politician, Paul Crowley, has persistent waking visions in which he sees himself and a beautiful Far Eastern woman drowning in a rushing river. Crowley seeks out Dr. Rhodes, who discovers through Kirlian “aura” photography that a telepathic assassin is practicing biological imposition: an attack on Crowley’s psyche that will leave the diplomat vulnerable to suggestion.

**6. “Can a Dead Man Strike from Beyond the Grave?”** Written by Gene L. Coon; Directed by Alf Kjellin; airdate: February 26, 1972; *Guest Cast*: William Shatner (Edwin Danberry); Anne Archer (Elizabeth Danberry); Allison McKay (Phyllis Regan); Bettye Ackerman (Helene); Pam Peters (Stephanie); Robert B. Williams (Old Man).

Edwin Danberry is overcome by a strange vision: he sees an old man shooting an adulterous young wife. Soon, Danberry experiences other strange psychic phenomena: for one thing, he can play the piano ... though he has never had even a single lesson. Worried, Danberry’s wife, Elizabeth, enlists the help of Dr. Rhodes in ferreting out the truth. Unbeknownst to Edwin, there is someone in his house who is using ESP to make him murder his wife.

**7. “With This Ring, I Thee Kill”** Written by Robert Collins; Directed by Robert Day; airdate: March 4, 1972; *Guest Cast*: Lee Majors (Clay Ross); Will Geer (Reverend); Lucie Arnaz (Marguerite Webster); Richard Loo (Matsuo); Stacy Harris (Henry Webster); Richard Hale (Old Man); Florence Lake (Desiree); Dick Dinman (Doctor); Larry Watson (Mephistopheles); Kimberly Hyde (Girl in Hell).

Henry Webster, Dr. Rhodes' old college instructor, is murdered on the eve of his daughter's wedding by a ghostly figure who resembles the Man in the Iron Mask. Rhodes investigates and learns that young Marguerite Webster will soon be moving into the estate of Clay Ross ... once the home of legendary film and stage star Edmund Breakstone. Unfortunately, Breakstone's wife killed herself many years earlier, and Rhodes fears Marguerite is destined to meet the same fate. Worse than that, the reclusive Clay Ross is hiding a dangerous secret.

**8. "Witch, Witch, Burning Bright"** Written by John W. Bloch; Directed by John Badham; airdate: March 11, 1972; *Guest Cast:* Tiffany Bolling (Demaris Eden); Mike Farrell (Dr. Gil Clark); Dana Elcar (Attorney-at-Law, Ed Winslow); Cloris Leachman (Esther Eden); Harry Townes (Uncle Martin Fletcher); Kermit Murdock (Judge Miles Fuller); William Winterson (Thomas Howland); S. John Launer (Judge Fletcher); Jennie Blackton (Accused Woman).

Dr. Rhodes' Uncle Martin, who has just moved back near Salem, is haunted and murdered by a spectral witch. Young Demaris Eden believes she is a reincarnated witch, and responsible for Martin's death. At her trial, however, Rhodes comes to her defense to prove she is the victim of a dead witch's 300-year-old call for vengeance.

**9. "Eye of the Haunted"** Written by Calvin J. Clements, Sr.; Directed by Jeff Corey; airdate: March 18, 1972; *Guest Cast:* Mariette Hartley (Diana Parker/Terri Parker); Louise Latham (Mrs. Bennett); Rudi Solari (Detective); James Wainwright (Wayne Bennett); Mora Gray (Ada); Michael C. Gwynne (The Silversmith); Jillian Paul (First Ghost); Linda Burton (Second Ghost); Sarah Lord (Third Ghost).

Dr. Rhodes' girlfriend, a fellow university professor named Diana Parker, is murdered in the park by a shadowy figure. Rhodes meets Diana's twin sister, Terri, and learns that the same killer may be stalking her. A disturbed young man, whose mother is a mind reader, is also a powerful psychic who hears the thoughts of others. He is desperate to silence Terri ... a woman he believes to be the returning spirit of Diana.

**10. "Echo of a Distant Scream"** Written by Don Ingalls; Directed by Earl Bellamy; April 1, 1972; *Guest Cast:* Stefanie Powers (Paula); Steve Forrest (Glen Tuddle); A. Martinez (Billy).

A young rancher named Paula has disturbing visions of a white horse rearing and attacking. Furthermore, she sees the spirit of a young girl beckoning her. Rhodes enters the picture, and realizes that Paula's neighbor, Glen, may be hiding a murderous secret.

**11. "Whisper of Evil"** Written and directed by Robert Collins; airdate: April 8, 1972; *Guest Cast:* Percy Rodrigues (Sgt. "Woody" Woods); Paul Stewart (Dr. Adamson); Carole Welles (Monique Burroughs); Coleen Gray (Joyce); Frank Converse (Perry Singleton); Pat Delaney (Alice); Henry Beckman (Mr. Bennington); Phillip Pine (Dr. Lewis); Louis Quinn (Bernie); Murray MacLeod (Danny); Lewis Charles (Lee); Gracia Lee (Duke); Chris Hutson (Nurse).

A woman named Alice has a psychic impression of her sister, Monique, with whom she has been separated since childhood. Both women are in danger. Alice is dying from a failed kidney, and Monique has been captured by a Satanic cult. Dr. Rhodes hopes to find Monique, save her life, and then bring her back to the hospital, where she can donate a kidney and, in turn, save Alice.

**12. "The Shadow in the Well"** Written by John W. Bloch; Directed by Robert Day; airdate: April 15,

1972; *Guest Cast*: Will Geer (Dr. Jordan); Henry Silva (Ted “Lin Shu” Wolf); Mary Ann Mobley (Lisa); Jeanette Nolan (Mrs. Wolf); Mark Tapscott (Arnold); James Chandler (Daniel).

A widow is haunted by the ghost of her husband, Daniel. Rhodes attempts to help, but finds himself stymied by Lisa’s spiritual advisor, a man named Lin Shu who also happened to minister to Daniel. As Rhodes investigates, Lisa becomes more and more convinced that she is responsible for the accidental death of her husband, but Rhodes hopes to prove that Daniel’s death at the bottom of a well was no accident, and that another party is guilty.

**13. “Face of Ice”** Written by Don Ingalls; From a story by Anthony Lawrence; Directed by Daniel Haller; airdate: April 22, 1972; *Guest Cast*: Bradford Dillman (George); Christine Belford (Anna); George Murdock (Victor); Michael Pataki (Sheriff).

The vision of a terrifying motorcyclist wearing a frozen, icy helmet, is all that young Anna can remember of a fatal shooting incident. Dr. Rhodes seeks to help, and is embroiled in a mystery.

• *Second Season (Fall 1972)*

**14. “Coffin, Coffin, in the Sky” (aka “Flying Sepulcher of Death”)** Written by Leonard Kantor and Don Ingalls; Directed by Sutton Roley; airdate: September 23, 1972; *Guest Cast*: Ed Nelson (Sam, the Pilot); Marge Redmond (Nurse Kelly); Stephen McNally (Bud); Jess Walton (Lilly Warren); Barbara Babcock (Arlene); Colby Chester (Mitch); Sharon Gless (Kay); Casey MacDonald (Janice); James Daughton (Hank).

Dr. Rhodes flies the unfriendly skies when a fellow passenger on board his plane, an injured folk singer named Lilly Warren, experiences a premonition of the plane’s destruction just short of landing. In Lilly’s demented nightmare, the pilot of the plane is a ghoul who flies a horse-drawn hearse, and she sees each of the passengers, including Dr. Rhodes, dead in a coffin.

**15. “Dear Joan, We Are Going to Scare You to Death”** Written by Jonathan Stone; Directed by John Newland; airdate: September 30, 1972; *Guest Cast*: Joan Crawford (Joan Fairchild); Scott Hylands (Jason); David Ladd (Paul); Kelli Jean Peters (Laurie); Martine Bartlett (Carrie); Lenore Kasdorf (Karen); Anne Lockhart (Diana).

An asthmatic older woman, Joan Fairchild, crashes her car into a tree to avoid hitting a dog. Joan finds her way to a lake, where she experiences an unusual premonition: she sees her dead daughter, Diana, and another young woman named Laurie, drowning. When Joan finds her way to a nearby house, she meets Laurie, a deaf girl, in the flesh, and learns that psychic experiments are being conducted on her. Before long, Joan must use her own ESP abilities to prevent a group of powerful young psychics from scaring her to death.

**16. “Witness Within”** Written by Ed Waters; Directed by Sutton Roley; airdate: October 7, 1972; *Guest Cast*: June Allyson (Julie Desmond); Tippy Walker (Ruth Desmond); Nan Martin (Dora Hallam); Michael Strong (Frank Moore); Willard Sage (Ansel Garnett); Charles Picerni (Germaine); Michael Masters (First Guard); Roger Mosley (Second Guard).

A third-shift data processor who lives with her blind mother has a psychic flash in which she is attacked by a shadowy intruder. Rhodes probes Julie’s memories and determines that she is witnessing

an attack that occurred while she was still in the womb, back in 1952. In fact, Julie's psychic vision may be the only evidence that can get her father out of life imprisonment, and target the real attacker.

**17. "With Affection, Jack the Ripper"** Written by Don Ingalls; Directed by Robert Day; airdate: October 14, 1972; *Guest Cast*: Robert Foxworth (Adam); Percy Rodrigues (Woody); Patty Duke (Elizabeth); Jannis Durkins (2nd Girl); Mitch Carter (Policeman); Heather Lowe (1st Girl); Marilyn Nix (Secretary).

While working on a psychic experiment with Dr. Rhodes' colleague, Elizabeth, Adam becomes possessed by the spirit of Jack the Ripper, and seems to lose his way between past and present. Detective Woods and Dr. Rhodes attempt to stop Adam before he continues a killing spree eerily reminiscent of one in Victorian England, 1888.

**18. "Once Upon A Chilling"** Written by Don Ingalls; Directed by Sutton Roley; airdate: October 28, 1972; *Guest Cast*: Susan Strasberg (Laura Anders); Joel Fabiani (Edward Milling); John Hillerman (Adrian Weems); David Huddleston (Dr. Peace); Robert Brubaker (Doctor Cloister); Elizabeth Harrower (Maid).

An eccentric millionaire, Doctor Cloister, is suspended in cryogenic freeze after a fatal fall down the stairs in his mansion. His secretary, Laura Anders, seeks help from Dr. Rhodes when she experiences psychic visions of her frozen ex-employer. With Laura's help, Rhodes begins to suspect that Cloister was murdered, and that his dream of prolonging his life through cryonics may yet be in danger.

**19. "Through a Flame, Darkly"** Written by Dick Nelson; Directed by John Newland; airdate: November 4, 1972; *Guest Cast*: Sandra Dee (Alice Martin); John Anderson (Norm, the Sheriff); Charles Knox Robinson (Mike Martin); John Karlen (Ed); Peggy Feury (Dr. Milburn); Val Bisoglio (Police Officer); Lenny Montana (Barney); Jack Rader (Man); Russell Arms (Doctor); Eleanore Berry (Hostess); Pammie Kenneally (Beth).

Alice Martin has persistent visions of a deadly fire, broken eyeglasses and an empty slot in a morgue. She becomes convinced that her childhood friend, Beth, is somehow trying to convey a psychic message to her that she is in terrible danger. Alice explores her vision, and sets out to save Beth's life before it is too late.

**20. "I Did Not Mean to Slay Thee"** Written by Ed Waters; Directed by Allen Baron; airdate: November 11, 1972; *Guest Cast*: Pernell Roberts (Paul Pettigrew); Michael Witney (Jack Charleroi/Simmons); Pamela Franklin (Bonnie); Michael Baseleon (Dr. William Vaughn); Christine Dixon (Lynn Newland); Jason Wingreen (Dr. Morris Wilbur); Lindsay Workman (Felton); Gene O'Donnell (Manager); Connie Bryant Milton (Nurse Anne); Keith Rogers (Ruth).

While reading in his office, Dr. Rhodes suddenly experiences a psychic connection with the artist (and former student) who painted the portrait hanging on his wall. When Rhodes investigates, he finds that Bonnie is dying from a liver malfunction. She has been having an affair with a married man, Jack, who is poisoning his wife, the heiress to a drug company's millions. Strangely, Bonnie and Mrs. Simmons are both feeling the effects of the poisoning.

**21. "And Scream by the Light of the Moon" (aka "Candle, Candle, Burning Bright")** Written by John T. Dugan and Don Ingalls; From a story by John T. Dugan; Directed by John Newland; airdate:

November 25, 1972; *Guest Cast*: Sallie Shockley (Carol); Josephine Hutchinson (Maude Hacker); Michael Glaser (David); Scott Glenn (Mark Hall); Margaret Markov (Mary Ruth); Chris Holter (Jeanne).

A beautiful young coed named Carol, who is terrorized by her harsh and unforgiving grandmother, “sees” herself dying in a blazing fire. As she burns in a delirious fever, Dr. Rhodes seeks to help Carol, and soon learns that a tragic incident from her past may be the fuel behind this latest conflagration.

**22. “If I Should Die Before I Wake”** Written by John W. Bloch; Directed by Bernard Girard; airdate: December 2, 1972; *Guest Cast*: Stefanie Powers (Jean Ames); Jane Wyman (Ruth Ames); Gene Evans (Aaron); Michael Lane (Sam); Dennis Dugan (Bill); Rod McCary (Dan); Daniel Kemp (Sheriff).

A woman, Jean, returns to her old home and is haunted by visions of a gruesome murder. In no time, she recognizes the corpse she sees buried in the basement during the nightmare: it is Jean herself! Soon, Jean must ask herself some difficult questions pertaining to her own survival, and she wonders if the future can be changed at all ... or if her premonition is unchangeable, and the deadly future is written in stone.

**23. “Five Widows Weeping”** Written by Robert Specht; Directed by Allen Baron; airdate: December 9, 1972; *Guest Cast*: Mary Ann Mobley (Nancy Sutherland); Barry Sullivan (Amos Sutherland); Ellen Weston (Joanna Sutherland); William Jordan (John Sutherland); Hank Brandt (Steve Sutherland); Nelson Welch (Eameb); Read Morgan (First Man); George Sawaya (Second Man).

Rhodes’ old college buddy, John Sutherland, is kidnapped after being named the new head of his wealthy family. John’s new wife, Nancy, experiences several psychic visions in which she sees him dead. Rhodes and Nancy work together to find John, and they discover the identity of the kidnapper in a deadly mine called “the Widowmaker”—a place owned by the Sutherland family where five miners died years before.

**24. “Gallows in the Wind”** Written by Don Ingalls; Directed by Alan Crosland; airdate: December 16, 1972; *Guest Cast*: Richard Hatch (Owen Preston); Meg Foster (Carol Evers); Gary Clark (Ed); R.G. Armstrong (Ed); Virginia Gregg (Thelma); George Ives (Frank).

Psychic terror strikes vacationers stranded in a mountain lodge. Ghoulish imagery, including a gallows and a vengeful hangman, haunt Dr. Rhodes as he digs his way to the truth.

**25. “The Eyes That Would Not Die”** Written by David P. Harmon; Directed by Robert Day; airdate: December 23, 1972; *Guest Cast*: Rudy Solari (Dr. Mike Simmons); Kathleen Geckle (Cathy Turner); Percy Rodriques (Sgt. “Woody” Woods); Tom Bosley (Albert Young); Frank Ashmore (Orderly); Stanley Kamel (Killer); Regis Cordic (Commentator); Laura Campbell (Night Nurse); Lisa Moore (Nurse Greer); Sandy Champion (Orderly); Mary Ann Beck (Girl in Vision).

A blind girl is given back her sight through the miracle of cornea transplant surgery, but her joy is short-lived. Her eyes, donated by a murder victim, reveal the identity of a serial killer who has already drowned four women. Dr. Rhodes and a police lieutenant attempt to protect the girl from the killer, but the girl’s doctor warns that if stressed, Cathy Turner may lose her vision again, permanently this time.



*Note:* Some reference sources list an episode entitled “Two Hour Streets” as part of *The Sixth Sense*’s second season. However, this episode may be either an unproduced teleplay, or an earlier version of an aired story. No such episode currently appears in *The Sixth Sense* syndication package.

## *Ghost Story/Circle of Fear (1972–1973)*

### CRITICAL RECEPTION

“NBC ... can be held responsible ... for all the ... stories in this series. They are consistently dreadful, substituting the chill of boredom for the thrill of suspense. Week after week, this is perhaps the silliest of all the silly hours on TV.”—*Time Magazine*, December 18, 1972, page 67.

“Mr. Cabot ... looking very much like a butler, appears at the beginning and end of each installment of the series, which is promising ‘a contemporary mind-tingling chiller for viewers of all ages.’ ... I didn’t scream. And I didn’t laugh either. I did yawn once or twice. Sometimes the ghosts work. More often, they don’t.”—John J. O’Connor, *The New York Times*: Cabot in “*Ghost Story*, A Chiller Series,” September 29, 1972.

“The failure of *Ghost Story* was especially surprising in that its producer was William Castle, whose motion pictures usually displayed expertise and enthusiasm. As it was, the series evidenced little more than someone’s inexplicable enthusiasm for stories about animal ghosts. An attempt was made to stir up interest by changing the title to *Circle of Fear* but no other alterations were apparent.”—Les Daniels, *Living in Fear*, Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1975, page 230.

“As host, Sebastian Cabot sidled on briefly in the courtyard of what appeared to be a retirement home ... the setup featuring a schizoid child, would have worked better without camera trickery wedged into the plot continuity via a double-image gimmick.... Also, the sunshiny canvas didn’t need spook music.”—Howard Thompson, *The New York Times*, reviewing *Ghost Story*’s “Alter Ego” episode on October 28, 1973, page 63.

### FORMAT

In *Ghost Story*, Winston Essex, the erudite owner of the beautiful Mansfield House, recounts the stories of his many house guests, each of whom has had an unfortunate and terrifying experience with the supernatural. Essex (Sebastian Cabot) opens each hour-long tale with a brief on-screen narration. In contrast to Rod Serling in *The Twilight Zone* or *Night Gallery*, Essex is not an ironic or objective commentator on the proceedings. Instead, he seems sympathetic to the characters involved in the drama. In each *Ghost Story* narration, Cabot addresses the television audience directly, as if it too is a guest in the magnificent, if decidedly chilly, Mansfield House.

In *Circle of Fear*, Essex and Mansfield House are missing, and the series is simply a collection of horror tales concerning some element of the supernatural, usually with a “revenge” aspect thrown in as well.

### HISTORY

*Ghost Story/Circle of Fear* is the brainchild of two modern horror legends. The first is William Castle (1914–1977), the great 1950s exploitation film showman responsible for such gimmicks as “Emergo” (in which a skeleton would “float” down the movie aisle, courtesy of carefully hidden wires, during

key moments of the film *The House on Haunted Hill* [1958]) and “Percepto” (in which theater seats would deliver a mild electric jolt to viewers of the 1959 Vincent Price movie *The Tingler*). A former actor and one-time colleague of Orson Welles, William Castle is best remembered for producing and directing a string of highly successful horror films which include: *Macabre* (1957), *Thirteen Ghosts* (1960), *Mr. Sardonicus* (1960), and *Strait Jacket* (1964). Perhaps Castle’s greatest filmic achievement was producing the Roman Polanski–directed film *Rosemary’s Baby* (1968), an unquestioned horror classic.

The second instigator of *Ghost Story/Circle of Fear* was Richard Matheson, scribe of such films as *The Incredible Shrinking Man* (1957), *Master of the World* (1961), *The Omega Man* (1971), *The Legend of Hell House* (1973), and *Somewhere in Time* (1980). As impressive as those cinematic credentials are, Matheson was also a mainstay of horror television in the 1960s and early 1970s. He wrote more than a dozen episodes of *The Twilight Zone* (1959-64), including “The Last Flight,” “A World of Difference,” “A World of His Own,” and “The Nick of Time” (starring William Shatner) in 1960; “The Invaders” and “Once Upon a Time” in 1961; “Little Girl Lost” and “Young Man’s Fancy” in 1962; and “Mute,” “Death Ship,” and “Nightmare at 20,000 Feet” (again with Shatner) in 1963. Outside of *The Twilight Zone*, Matheson is remembered for penning the *Star Trek* episode “The Enemy Within,” *Night Gallery* entries “The Big Surprise” and “The Funeral,” the TV movie *Duel* (1971) (directed by Steven Spielberg), and his adaptation of Jeff Rice’s book, *The Night Stalker*, into the first Kolchak movie in 1972.

With two such talents at the helm, *Ghost Story* was green-lighted for a pilot by NBC, the same network which had been successful with *Rod Serling’s Night Gallery*. Matheson wrote the series pilot, a frightening vignette called “The New House” (aka “She Cries”), based on a short story by Elizabeth Walter. Silver screen and TV icon Sebastian Cabot (*Checkmate* [1960-62], *Twice-Told Tales* [1963], *The Twilight Zone*: “A Nice Place to Visit” [1960]), had just finished his turn as “Giles” on the popular, long-lived sitcom *Family Affair* (1966-71) and was enlisted to play the mysterious but always polite *Ghost Story* series narrator, Winston Essex. This was not a stretch for the talented Cabot, who had already played host on an earlier dramatic anthology called *Suspense* (1964). And, in “A Nice Place to Visit” on the original *Twilight Zone*, Cabot had played Mr. Pip, a seemingly friendly but actually quite malevolent guide to hell. Although Cabot was not playing so deceitful and devious a person in *Ghost Story*, there was always the feeling that beneath Cabot’s restrained, polished civility there might *just* be something less wholesome in Winston Essex.

The one hour *Ghost Story* pilot, which starred David Birney and Jeanette Nolan, aired on March 17, 1972, as part of an NBC special called *Double Play*. “The New House” filled the first hour, and the pilot for the Claude Akins trucker TV series called *Movin On* (1974-76) rounded out the second hour. *Double Play* was a ratings success, and both portions of it went to series.

On March 30, 1970, *The New York Times* announced the production of a *Ghost Story* TV series along with four other new programs, *Probe*, *Banyon*, *The Little People*, and *The NBC Wednesday Mystery*. *Ghost Story* was described by its producers as a show in which “strange happenings” would occur to “ordinary people.”<sup>1</sup> William Castle went further in describing the format of his new series:

My idea is not merely to shock or scare, but to do it in a fun way. Like a ride on a roller coaster. You scream and you laugh.<sup>2</sup>

With that template in mind, *Ghost Story* commenced its regular network run on September 15, 1972. Episodes were penned by D.C. Fontana, the ubiquitous writer of virtually every 1970s genre TV show from *Land of the Lost* (1974) and *The Fantastic Journey* (1977) to *Logan's Run* (1977) and *Buck Rogers in the 25th Century* (1979-81). Also involved were the legendary Robert Bloch (*Psycho* [1960]), Anthony Lawrence, creator of *The Sixth Sense* (1972), Jimmy Sangster (*Kolchak: The Night Stalker*: "Horror in the Heights" [1974]), Seeleg Lester (regular contributor to the original *The Outer Limits* [1962-64]), and frequent *Night Gallery* scribe Halsted Welles. Unfortunately, the talented Richard Matheson, who "developed" *Ghost Story* for television, did not submit any further scripts beyond the pilot.

On the directing side, Richard Donner (*Superman* [1978], *Lethal Weapon* [1987]), John Llewelyn Moxey (*Genesis II* [1973], *The Night Stalker* [1972]), Leo Penn (*Star Trek*: "The Enemy Within" [1966]), Walter Doninger (*Night Gallery*: "Clean Kills and Other Trophies" [1970]), Daryl Duke (*Night Gallery*: "The Last Laurel" [1970]), and Don McDougall (*Star Trek*: "The Squire of Gothos" [1967], *The Night Gallery*) all contributed their talents.

As with most anthology series, success or failure for *Ghost Story* rested on not only the writing and direction, but on the appeal of its rotating guest cast. Prominent actors on *Ghost Story* included Stuart Whitman and Gena Rowlands in "The Concrete Captain," James Franciscus (*Beneath the Planet of the Apes* [1970]), *Night Slaves* [1970]) and Meg Foster in "At the Cradle Foot," Karen Black (*Trilogy of Terror* [1975]) in "Bad Connection," Carolyn Jones (*The Addams Family* [1964-66]) and William Windom in "The Summer House," Helen Hayes in "Alter Ego," Pamela Franklin (*Legend of Hell House* [1973]) in "Half a Death," Jodie Foster (*Silence of the Lambs* [1991]) in "House of Evil," Doug McClure in "Cry of the Cat," and other notables such as Hal Linden, Geraldine Page, Angie Dickinson, and Patricia Neal.

Despite the behind-the-scenes and on-the-screen accumulation of talent, *Ghost Story* was not well received by critics. *The New York Times* reviewed it twice (once by John J. O'Connor and once by Howard Thompson) and each review (of "The Concrete Captain" and "Alter Ego," respectively) was less than enthusiastic. In December of 1972, *Time* magazine added its own (negative) opinion of *Ghost Story* based on a viewing of "Elegy for a Vampire." Worse than the critical brickbats, *Ghost Story* failed to deliver solid ratings for NBC, and was regularly trounced by the competition (*Room 222*, *The Odd Couple*, and the *CBS Friday Night Movie*.) Accordingly, a mid-season revamp was called for.

After 14 stories, Sebastian Cabot, Winston Essex, and Mansfield House were all given the boot, and the title *Ghost Story* was replaced with the less traditional sounding moniker *Circle of Fear*. A more "mod" opening sequence was also devised. Instead of a night-time shot of the imposing Mansfield House with the title *Ghost Story* forming out of a swirling, misty atmospheric disturbance, psychedelic gold patterns were flashed on the screen for the new credits sequence. This rapid-fire image was followed quickly by an orange circle (with the portrait of a woman vampire in the center). That image was then replaced by a whirling "hypno-wheel," and the title *Circle of Fear* spun into view on cue.

Despite the change to a more contemporary and fast-paced opening sequence, there were few changes in the format of the series. Although the new stories would begin with no fanfare or narration, they were very much in the same vein as *The Ghost Story* tales. Perhaps this was not a surprise since the "new" *Circle of Fear* was manned by the same group of artists, with D.C. Fontana, Anthony Lawrence, Jimmy Sangster, and Seeleg Lester again writing stories and Daryl Duke and Don McDougall

continuing to direct. Like its predecessor, *Circle of Fear* continued to offer big-name guest stars like Janet Leigh in “Death’s Head,” Martin Sheen in “Dark Vengeance,” and Susan Oliver in “Spare Parts,” but even the fine efforts of these performers, along with Susan Dey, Tyne Daly, Patty Duke Astin, and David Soul, could not save the series from low ratings.

*Circle of Fear* was canceled by NBC on April 14, 1973 (along with *Laugh-In*, *Search*, *Madigan*, and *The Bobby Darin Show*),<sup>3</sup> and the last show of the series was aired on March 30, 1973 ... scarcely a year after the premiere of *Ghost Story* on *Double Play*. Despite the fact that it boasted a catalog of only 23 episodes, *Ghost Story/Circle of Fear* has occasionally been seen in syndication since its abbreviated network run. It aired on NBC Channel 4 in New York City in the mid-to-late '80s, and has reappeared infrequently in the '90s on the Sci-Fi Channel.

### CRITICAL COMMENTARY

*Ghost Story* started its life with a remarkably good pilot, the *Double Play* episode “The New House,” by Richard Matheson. In this opener, a pregnant woman became convinced that her new house was haunted. Her pragmatic husband didn’t believe her, and worse, he attributed her odd behavior to her medical condition. Although that hardly sounds like original material, “The New House” was a remarkably frightening hour for television. From William Castle’s *Rosemary’s Baby*, the *Ghost Story* pilot adopted a central conceit: an unsupportive husband (here David Birney instead of John Cassavetes) and a disturbed, expecting woman (Barbara Parkins instead of Mia Farrow) whom everybody else suspects is paranoid. Sam Jaffe is even around in the Maurice Evans role of the elder gentleman who befriends the worried woman, and provides critical information about the supernatural plot.

Despite this borrowing of *Rosemary’s Baby* ideas, “The New House” emerged as a taut and frightening hour with a host of successfully carried-off ghoulish effects. Of course, Parkins’ suspicions about the haunted house proved correct, and she learns in the course of the hour that her home was built over a gallows where an unrepentant thief was hanged in the 1770s. The ghost of that thief now haunts the home, and “The New House” makes that haunting almost tangible. The audience hears the angry voice of the hanging mob; Parkins’ bathroom mirror becomes a smoky window through which the hanging can be viewed, etcetera. Most frightening of all is the climax, in which the ghost of the thief takes frightening form during a terrible thunderstorm. The ghost is seen only as a silhouette, periodically illuminated by lightning flashes. As this ghostly female ascends the staircase (seen at a high angle) with the express purpose of stealing the newborn baby’s soul, the chill of supernatural terror is captured almost perfectly.

Sadly, when *Ghost Story* became a weekly series, it lost much of the pace and terror which had so augmented “The New House.” On good weeks, the series could still plug into terrifying imagery, and on better weeks, that imagery even had dramatic purpose. In Anthony Lawrence’s (creator of *The Sixth Sense*) “At the Cradle Foot,” for instance, corporate lawyer Paul Dover (James Franciscus) found himself experiencing visions of his daughter—grown up in the dream—being killed (in agonizing slow motion) on a merry-go-round. Dover was in the dream too, on a carousel horse far behind his daughter ... unable to stop the incidents that lead to her death. This dream was a literalization of the story’s drama, which suggested that no matter how hard Dover attempted to change his daughter’s future, he would always be a little bit “behind” so-to-speak, unable to alter events or see just beyond the next curve. “At the Cradle Foot” was also an expression of that old genre chestnut (seen in

*Terminator 2* [1991]) that “you can’t change destiny.” Additionally, the story asked the question: Is it right to kill the parents of an unborn child if you have knowledge that this child will one day grow up to be a murderer? Although the story was not terribly original, it at least had *something* on its mind, and Dover’s eerier premonitions were stark and memorable, shot in a cold blue light ... as if the sun (and even hope) could not reach inside this nightmare world.

Other stories were far less memorable. “The Summer House” by Seeleg Lester best exemplified *Ghost Story*’s most vexing problem: it was terribly slow-paced and lethargic. In this tale, a jilted wife (Carolyn Jones) visits her husband’s summer house and is forced to relive the hours and moments leading up to the instant she killed her husband (by pushing him down a well.) As a half-hour drama, the show might have worked pretty well. At an hour, however, “The Summer House” was padded to excruciating length. The viewer was treated to scenes of Carolyn Jones opening the summer house, buying groceries, vacuuming a carpet, carrying towels to a linen closet, changing a fuse in the fuse box, flirting with neighbor William Windom ... ad nauseam.

These distractions, most of them without any dialogue at all, killed the pace of the tale. Furthermore, the plot of “The Summer House” was muddled. Although Sebastian Cabot had introduced the concept in his opening narration that it would be horrible to be trapped in a time warp, in a so-called suspended moment of time, the story also attempted to establish that the house was an evil, living entity, responsible for the constant reiteration of the murder sequence. This raised the question: Why not just leave the house? Additionally, “The Summer House” was not particularly adept at clarifying its setting. Was the story actually occurring postmurder (with Jones experiencing flashbacks), premurder (with Jones experiencing premonitions) or at another time altogether? Overall, the story was difficult to follow and long-winded.

*Ghost Story*’s only stab at a vampire show, “Elegy for a Vampire” by Mark Weingert, was equally suspenseless. This episode introduced Hal Linden as a vampire, David Wells, almost from the get-go, so there was little or no mystery or surprise in the remainder of the episode, which wanted to be “revelatory.” This was a problem, since most of the story concerned the quest to hunt down and discover the identity of the vampire. To the audience, it was already a foregone, established conclusion. Although “Elegy for a Vampire” featured a few interesting flourishes, especially in how it looked at vampirism as a kind of drug addiction, with Linden getting the shakes when he needed an infusion of new blood, it was (like “The Summer House”) slow-paced and seemingly lacking in forward momentum.

Accompanied with banal dialogue (“Do you have a dark side that you keep hidden?” Hal Linden’s girlfriend asks in all earnestness) and some silly ideas (that co-ed girls would continue to walk unaccompanied through a cemetery on campus despite half-a-dozen bloody deaths there), “Elegy for a Vampire” was one of *Ghost Story*’s worst entries.

Through it all, Sebastian Cabot played the host, and he was a somewhat interesting character. Essex described himself and his massive, mysterious home as “regal dinosaurs” in the midst of a modern city. He also expressed a yearning for a simpler time, “a period of quality.” In some sense then, *Ghost Story* could be seen as an attempt to tell old-fashioned horror stories in a contemporary world, but this tenet was applied rather too haphazardly, and it is difficult to see how stories about changing destiny (“At the Cradle Foot”), and time-warps (“The Summer House”) buttressed this format. Usually, each Winston Essex prologue featured Cabot visiting various rooms in Mansfield House, such as the dining room in “The New House,” the library in “The Summer House,” and the private study in “Elegy for a

Vampire,” and offering his sympathetic take on the story about to be seen. In “The New House,” for instance, Cabot genuinely seemed to care about the family moving into the haunted house, and he even stated that he “wished they weren’t going there.” This was a far cry from the objective/ironic stance of Rod Serling, and it was interesting, if not always compelling.

When *Ghost Story* morphed into *Circle of Fear*, Cabot was dumped, but things stayed much the same, with slow-paced stories missing in any genuine originality. *Circle of Fear* opened with a standard “revenge from beyond the grave” story entitled “Death’s Head.” In this tale, Janet Leigh murdered her insect-loving husband and was subsequently terrorized by a death’s-head moth emblazoned with the image of her husband’s face. In an especially absurd denouement, Leigh found herself under siege by a swarm of insects ... which the production team inadequately dramatized as a bunch of moving shadows on the wall. Poor Leigh, a dignified and excellent actress, looked particularly ludicrous as she swatted at the invisible bugs while little moving shadows were reflected on the wall behind her. Not surprisingly, “Death’s Head” was also padded and slow-paced, featuring long-winded flashback sequences of moments already dramatized by the inadequate teleplay.

“Spare Parts” was more of the same, another revenge from beyond the grave plot. This time, a deceased surgeon (Don Knight) avenged his murder when his donated organs (in their new hosts) sought out and attacked his murderous wife (Susan Oliver). In this case, the tale was even more remote, as the audience had nobody likable to identify with. Both Knight and Oliver played murderous, evil people.

Harlan Ellison and D.C. Fontana penned one of the worst episodes of *Circle of Fear*, “Earth, Air, Fire and Water,” a lackluster show about six artists in an old studio who happen upon a dusty chest filled with “evil” glass jars. The story wasted a good cast (which included Tyne Daly and Brooke Bundy), had no focus, and failed to convey even one major plot point. The crux of the story was that the glass jars influenced and changed both the work and behavior of the “new age,” communal artists. Yet there were so many characters in the drama that the all-important change was never really noticeable or prominent ... each artist seemed interchangeable from start to finish. The dialogue attempted again and again to tell of the “change” in these uninteresting personalities but the impact was lost because each person was so bland, and no screen time had been devoted to establishing individual identities instead of ciphers. The final “stinger” in the tale, relating to a metal-worker’s unpleasant fate, was a shocking moment of horror, but one which made little or no sense, thematically.

For a series that lasted only 23 episodes, *Ghost Story/Circle of Fear* was strangely repetitive. Animal spirits attacked in “Cry of the Cat,” “Creature of the Canyon,” and “Dark Vengeance.” Weird doppelgangers played a role in “Alter Ego,” “Half a Death,” and “The Ghost of Potter’s Field.” Plus, the ever-present “revenge from beyond the grave” tale was rehashed in “Death’s Head,” “Spare Parts,” “House of Evil,” “The Summer House,” “The Dead We Leave Behind” and more. To its credit, *Ghost Story/Circle of Fear* never became camp, and it always took its horror tales seriously. It offered no mitigating elements (like Jack Laird’s humorous, but insipid, blackouts between more serious installments of Rod Serling’s *The Night Gallery*), and it seemed earnest in its attempts to scare the audience. It was also a well-acted, well-cast series offering excellent production values ... factors which the cheap, syndicated horror anthologies of the 1980s like *Tales from the Darkside*, *Monsters*, and *Freddy’s Nightmares* failed to capitalize on. Yet despite these praiseworthy strengths, *Ghost Story* was usually lackluster and unexciting. It was lethargic, uninventive, and repetitive when it could have been exciting and dramatic. In all likelihood, the same stories, which seemed so padded at an hour,

could have been told far more effectively had *Ghost Story/Circle of Fear* been only a half-hour long.

## CAST AND CREDITS

*Cast:* Sebastian Cabot (Winston Essex) Episodes: 1–14.

*Credits: Creator:* Richard Matheson. *Executive Producer:* William Castle. *Producer:* Joel Rogosin. *Story Consultants:* Jimmy Sangster, Mark Weingart and Seeleg Lester. *Developed for television by:* Richard Matheson. *Music:* Billy Goldenberg and Robert Prince. *Director of Photography:* Emmet Bergholz. *Casting Executive:* Renee Valente. *Unit Production Manager:* James H. Brown. *Assistant to Executive Producer:* Rick Blum. *Art Director:* Ross Bellah and Cary Odell. *Film Editors:* (various shows): Frederick Baratta, David Wage. *Casting:* Shirley Ellison. *Set Decorators:* Joanne MacDougall, Stuart Reiss, Robert Signorelli, Ralph Sylos. *Makeup Supervisor:* Ben Lane. *Special Effects:* Phil Cory. *Assistant Director:* Jack P. Cunningham. *Production Coordinator:* Louis H. Goldstein. *Music and Sound Effects:* Sunset Editorial. *Opticals:* Photo Effex. Filmed at the Burbank Studios. A William Castle Production, in Association with Colex Enterprises.

## EPISODE GUIDE

• *Ghost Story (September 1972–December 22, 1972)*

**1. “The New House” (Pilot)** Written by Richard Matheson; Directed by John Llewelyn Moxey; airdate: March 17, 1972; *Guest Cast:* Barbara Parkins (Eileen Travis); David Birney (John Travis); Mrs. Ramsey (Jeanette Nolan); Sam Jaffe (DeWitt); Allyn Ann McLerie (Thomasina Barrows).

The Travis family moves into a new house atop scenic Pleasant Hill. When the expectant wife, Mrs. Travis, starts to hear ghostly noises at night, she becomes convinced that their new house is haunted. She visits a local historian, DeWitt, who confirms her suspicion. The Travis house has been built over a gallows: the very spot where a defiant, unrepentant thief named Thomasina Barrows was hanged on the second day of March 1779.

**2. “The Dead We Leave Behind”** Written by Robert Specht; Directed by Paul Stanley; airdate: September 15, 1972; *Guest Cast:* Jason Robards, Jr. (Elliott Brent); Stella Stevens (Joanna Brent); Jack Kelly (Motorist); John McLiam (Paul); Skip Ward (Tommy Harper).

A local sheriff, Elliott Brent, accidentally kills his lazy, obnoxious wife. Desperate, he plots to extricate himself from what he is afraid will be construed as murder. Soon, however, Elliott finds that the television, a strange local legend about snow, and his wife’s angry spirit have encircled him in a deadly trap.

**3. “The Concrete Captain”** Written by Jimmy Sangster; Directed by Richard Donner; airdate: September 22, 1972; *Guest Cast:* Stuart Whitman (Ed Lucas); Gena Rowlands (Kate Lucas); Walter Burke (Daniel); Glenn Wilder (Captain); Lloyd Gough (Doctor).

A vacationing couple is waylaid in a small coastal town when the wife, Mrs. Lucas, is unexpectedly “possessed” by a wooden concrete captain ... a gift from her husband. Mrs. Lucas now believes that she is the wife of a real sea captain, a man who died years earlier.

**4. “At the Cradle Foot”** Written by Anthony Lawrence; Directed by Don McDougall; airdate:



September 29, 1972; *Guest Cast*: James Franciscus (Paul Dover); Elizabeth Ashley (Karen Dover); Jeremy Slate (Rafe Norris); Meg Foster (Julie Barnes); Lori Busk (Young Emily Dover); Lisa James (Grown-up Emily Dover); George McCallister Jr. (Rafe Jr.); Karl Swensen (Ed Barnes); Judson Pratt (The Judge).

Paul Dover, a corporate attorney, is haunted by a premonition that his young daughter, Emily, will grow up only to be murdered as an adult by a man named Rafe Norris Jr. Desperate to save his daughter's life, perhaps in part because he ignored a similar premonition about his own father's death, Paul becomes obsessed with changing destiny. He learns that a beautiful young woman, Julie, is carrying the fetus of his daughter's future murderer, and must decide what steps to take to prevent the as-yet-uncommitted crime.

**5. "Bad Connection"** Written by John McGreevey; Directed by Walter Doninger; airdate: October 6, 1972; *Guest Cast*: Karen Black (Barbara); Michael Tolan (Keith); Sandra Deel (Angie); Kaz Garas (Phil Briggs); Skip Homeier (Steve); Curt Conway (Prescott); Ned Florey (Ed Talbot); Ellen Geer (Marian); Larry Fleischman (Mail Man); James Watson (Appleton).

Barbara Shepherd promised her husband that she would never love anyone other than him. Now he is dead, killed in action, and Barbara is engaged to marry another man. Barbara's accord with her husband, however, is not forgotten, and she soon begins to receive phone calls from a man who sounds mysteriously like her dead husband.

**6. "The Summer House"** Written by Seeleg Lester; Directed by Leo Penn; airdate October 13, 1972; *Guest Cast*: Carolyn Jones (Martha Alcott); Steve Forrest (Andrew Alcott); William Windom (Charlie Pender); Regis Toomey (Sam Streeter); Robert Mandan (Walter Jerrold); Darlene Conley (Ruth Jerrold); Harvey Fisher (Plumber); Wayne Heffley (Postman).

Martha Alcott drives up to her summer house by the lake. She has come ahead of her husband, Andrew, this year ... yet everyone in town insists that Mr. Alcott has already been to the house. Soon, Martha has a premonition in which she argues with her husband, who has been unfaithful, and pushes him into a well in the basement. As this vision looks to become true, Martha suspects that the summer house is alive, and that it hates her.

**7. "Alter Ego"** Written by D.C. Fontana; From a story by Stanley Ellin; Directed by David Lowell Rich; airdate: October 27, 1972; *Guest Cast*: Helen Hayes (Miss Gilden); Michael-James Wixted (Robert); Colin Wilcox-Horne (Molly); Charles Aidman (Jack Cameron); Geoffrey Horne (Mr. Harkness); Janet MacLachlan (Mrs. Dillon); Phyllis Love (Joan Howard); Gene Andrusco (Davey).

Charming old schoolteacher Miss Gilden is unexpectedly put into jeopardy when a troublesome student threatens her life. Complicating the matter, the student is not merely dangerous, he is the evil duplicate of a wheelchair-bound boy named Robert.

**8. "Half a Death"** Written by Henry Slesar; Directed by Les Martinson; airdate: November 3, 1972; *Guest Cast*: Pamela Franklin (Christina/Lisa); Eleanor Parker (Paula); Stephen Brooks (Ethan); Andrew Duggan (Jeremy); Signe Hasso (Mrs. Eliscu); Taylor Lacher (Charlie).

After her twin sister, Lisa, and her father pass away, Christina begins to hear the voice of her dead sibling calling to her from beyond the grave.

**9. "House of Evil"** Written by Robert Bloch; Directed by Daryl Duke; airdate: November 10, 1972; *Guest Cast:* Melvyn Douglas (Grandpa); Richard Mulligan (Tom); Joan Hotchkiss (Fran); Jodie Foster (Judy); Brad Savage (Kevin); Mildred Dunnock (Mrs. Rule); Alan Fudge (Dr. Parker).

An embittered grandfather gives his granddaughter Judy a special dollhouse. It is not just a present, however, it is a supernatural tool through which Grandpa can exact his long-held revenge against a son-in-law who remarried after the death of the old man's daughter.

**10. "Cry of the Cat"** Written by William Bast; Directed by Arnold Laven; airdate: November 24, 1972; *Guest Cast:* Doug McClure (Dan Hollis); Lauri Peters (Mariah); Mariette Hartley (Sheila Conway); Jackie Cooper Coyle; Don Brown (First Cowboy); Clint Richey (Second Cowboy).

A beautiful woman, Mariah, may be hiding a deadly secret from her boyfriend, Dan. Is she possessed by the spirit of a deadly cougar, or is she, in fact, a cougar herself?

**11. "Elegy for a Vampire"** Written by Mark Weingart. Based on the story "Pendergast" by Elizabeth Walter; Directed by Don McDougall; airdate: December 1, 1972; *Guest Cast:* Hal Linden (David Wells); Marlyn Mason (Laura Benton); Mike Farrell (Frank Simmons); Arthur O'Connell (Chief Houston); Sheila Larken (Marne); John Milford (Detective Thorpe); Susan Foster (Fern); Patricia Eltinge (The Co-ed); Heather North (Dana).

Young coeds are being murdered on a bustling college campus, and Chief Houston of campus security mobilizes a faculty night patrol in response. Among the volunteers is a widower and scholar, David Wells, whose most recent academic assignment involves editing the late Professor Pendergast's treatise on modern day vampires and blood diseases. Unbeknownst to anyone on campus, Wells is a vampire himself, a man with conscience who is tortured by his unusual condition and need for blood.

**12. "Touch of Madness"** Written by Halsted Welles; Directed by Robert Day; airdate: December 8, 1972; *Guest Cast:* Geraldine Page (Aunt Hattie); Rip Torn (Uncle John); Lynn Loring (Janet Walker); Michael Bell (Harry); Richard Angarola (Gray); Stacy Harris (Jim); Jan Clayton (Mrs. Wallker); George Wallace (Sheriff).

When her mother dies, Janet Walker inherits a house with a distinctly schizophrenic personality. At first, Janet believes she is going crazy when the house appears different at different times ... but soon she realizes there is a strange force at work, a force in no small part related to her strange Aunt Hattie and Uncle John.

**13. "Creature of the Canyon"** Written by Del Riseman; Directed by Walter Doniger; airdate: December 15, 1972; *Guest Cast:* Angie Dickinson (Carol Finney); Madlyn Rhue (Georgia); John Ireland (Arthur); Robert Donner (Ralph); Mary Murphy (Maggie).

A devilish dog terrorizes recent widow Carol Finney. As the attacks become more dangerous, Carol suspects that the dog is hounding her in an attempt to even the scales of justice for a wrong she once committed.

**14. "Time of Terror"** Written by Jimmy Sangster; From a story by Elizabeth Walter; Directed by Robert Day; airdate: December 22, 1972; *Guest Cast:* Patricia Neal (Ellen Alexander); Craig Stevens (Brett); Alice Ghostly (Betty); Douglas Henderson (George); Elliot Montgomery (Harry); Fred

Holliday (Desk Clerk); Bruce Kimmel (Bell Hop); Nelson D. Cuevas (Ambulance Doctor); Tony Ballen (Keno Caller); Onedine Vaughan (Keno Girl); Mark Tapscott (Security Guard); Mel Gallagher (Policeman).

Mrs. Alexander awakens in a hotel room to find her husband missing. When she investigates his disappearance, she discovers that other patrons in the hotel are missing as well ... and that the mystery may involve the hotel's casino.

• *Circle of Fear (January 1973–March 1973)*

**15. “Death’s Head”** Written by Rick Blum; Directed by James Neilson; airdate: January 5, 1973; *Guest Cast:* Janet Leigh (Carol); Rory Calhoun (Larry); Gene Nelson (Steven); Doreen Lang (Mrs. Norman); Ayn Ruymen (Young Gypsy Woman); Joshua Bryant (Doctor); Madeleine Taylor Holmes (Old Gypsy).

A neglected wife who is bothered by her husband's obsession with spiders, insects, and other creepy-crawlies plans to kill her spouse with the help of a gypsy potion. Carol hopes the death of her husband will encourage his best friend, Larry, to consummate a love affair with her, but she has not accounted for her husband's unusual interest in a creature called the death's head moth: a monster that is aware of her brutal act and fully capable of extracting a most deadly revenge.

**16. “Dark Vengeance”** Written by Peter L. Dixon; Directed by Herschel Daugherty; airdate: January 12, 1973; *Guest Cast:* Martin Sheen (Frank); Kim Darby (Cindy); Shelly Novak (Art).

On the job, a young demolition worker unearths a sealed box. Inside the box is a child's hobbyhorse. Before long, the demolition worker and his lover begin to experience deadly visions and nightmares which involve horses.

**17. “Earth, Air, Fire and Water”** Written by D.C. Fontana. From a story by Harlan Ellison and D.C. Fontana; Directed by Alex Singer; airdate: January 19, 1973; *Guest Cast:* Frank Converse (Sam Richards); Joan Blackman (Ellen); Tim McIntire (Jake); Tyne Daly (Anna); Brooke Bundy (Holly McCorry); Scott Marlowe (Paul); Oliver Clarks (Marks); Dabbs Greer (Mr. Bell).

A former magic shop and wax museum which is rumored to be haunted is given new life when several artists (a sculptor, a painter, a herbalist, a jeweler, a potter, a metal-worker) rent the place and rename it “The New Life Market.” In the back of the old house, the artists soon uncover a chest filled with six jars, and other items relating to witchcraft. Sam Richards, the metalworker, grows fearful as his once friendly comrades begin to change ... becoming gloomy and obsessed with death and horrifying images. When his fellow artists disappear one by one, Sam realizes he is fighting the occult.

**18. “Doorway to Death”** Written by Jimmy Sangster; Directed by Daryl Duke; airdate: January 26, 1973; *Guest Cast:* Susan Dey (Peggy); Barry Nelson (Jim); Leif Garrett (Robert); Dawn Lyn (Jane); Henry Johns (Truthers); Scott Thomas (Man Upstairs); Carolyn Stellar (Woman Upstairs).

A new home proves terrifying to two youngsters when they encounter a ghostly figure upstairs ... a man with an ax who beckons them, and grows ever closer.

**19. “Legion of Demons”** Written by Anthony Lawrence; Directed by Paul Stanley; airdate: February 2, 1973; *Guest Cast:* Shirley Hopkins (Beth); Jon Cypher (Keith); Neva Patterson (Mary); Bridget

Hanley (Dana); Kathryn Hays (Janet); Paul Carr (Bill).

Beth's roommate Janet disappears after a late night office party, and Beth grows suspicious. She soon realizes, however, what has happened when her own officemates, part of a devil worship cult, plan for Janet to be the next sacrifice.

**20. "The Graveyard Shift"** Written by Mann Rubin; Directed by Don McDougall; airdate February 16, 1973; *Guest Cast:* John Astin (Fred Colby); Patty Duke Astin (Linda Colby); Joe Renteria (Horne); Paul Picerni (Dr. Richardson); Stanford Jolley (Wolfman); William Castle (Fillmore); Hal Bokar (Apeman); Mathias Reitz (Claw); Jim Boles (Dr. Death); Allen Jaffe (Hunchback); Anthony Eldridge, Skip Riley, Roger Garrett, Eric Gethers, John D. Farfield (Royal Warlocks).

The security guard at Fillmore Studios is none other than Fred Colby, a one-time B-movie hero who fought monsters with vim and vigor until he was injured on the set. Now, 25 years later, Fred faces his greatest challenge when the specters of four old movie monsters try to commit evil one last time.

**21. "Spare Parts"** Written by Jimmy Sangster and Seeleg Lester; Story by Seeleg Lester and Paule Mason; Directed by Charles Dubin; airdate: February 23, 1973; *Guest Cast:* Susan Oliver (Ellen Pritchard); Christopher Connelly (Chuck); Meg Foster (Penny Wiseman); Alex Rocco (Moretti); Don Knight (Phillip Pritchard); Rick Lenz (Dr. Stephen Crossley).

Two men and one woman receive transplants after the "accidental" death of Dr. Phillip Pritchard, a world leader in the field of transplant surgery. After the operations are completed, however, Phillip's vengeful ghost inhabits each of the transplant recipients in an attempt to force a confession out of his murderous wife.

**22. "The Ghost of Potter's Field"** Written by Bill S. Ballinger; Directed by Don McDougall; airdate: March 23, 1973; *Guest Cast:* Tab Hunter (Bob Herrick); Louise Sorel (Nisa King); Gary Conway (John Walsh); Pat Harrington (Mark Riceman); Robert Mandan (Ted Murray); Phillip Pine (Dolf Ellis); Paul Winchell (Carlson).

Newspaper reporter Bob Herrick is completing a story on a local cemetery run by the county when he inexplicably sees a vision of what he believes to be himself. In actuality, his doppelganger is a ghost, and exact duplicate, who wants to possess Herrick's living body.

**23. "The Phantom of Herald Square"** Written by Seeleg Lester, Jimmy Sangster, Ed DeBlasio; Directed by James H. Brown; airdate: March 30, 1973; *Guest Cast:* Victor Jory (Old Man); David Soul (James Barlow); Meg Wyllie (Old Woman); Sheila Larken (Holly Brown); Dennis Lee Smith (Art Student).

A mysterious old man named James Barlow is a vampire of sorts: a man who can drain the youth and vitality from healthy victims to preserve his good looks and beauty. Young Holly becomes involved with the young-looking Barlow, unaware that he is actually an old monster who plans to steal her youth.

## *The Evil Touch* (1973–1974)

### CRITICAL RECEPTION

“a mixture of horror and science fiction stories, each ending with a twist in which something nasty happened to the episode’s protagonists. The protagonists, however, failed to gain any sympathy for their plight ... since they were all very unlikable characters ... who often deserved more than they got in the end.”—Alan Morton, *The Complete Directory to Science Fiction, Fantasy and Horror Television Series*, 1997, page 244.

“offered one season’s worth of bizarre and unintentionally campy horror-fantasy-sci-fi anthology ... on a shoestring budget. It featured well-known American actors ... in decidedly morbid teleplays. Host Anthony Quayle always looked somewhat embarrassed as he delivered the framework narration ... within a fog of what appeared to be cigar smoke.”—Gary Gerani and Paul Schulman, *Fantastic Television*, 1977, page 157.

### FORMAT

*The Evil Touch* is an Australian-produced horror anthology series which demonstrates how the “seed of evil” can germinate inside any human being, and thus cause great destruction to those who are infected with it. Each week, an individual would be briefly introduced, the story would freeze-frame at a critical juncture, and host Anthony Quayle would walk forward on the right side of the frame (while the “evil” individual was still seen frozen in a white box on the left side of the frame.) While a hazy blue smoke filtered in front of both images, the regal Quayle (impeccably dressed in suit and tie) would introduce the individual and the storyline, often quoting from various literary sources in the process (William Shakespeare in “Marci” and “The Fans,” Ralph Waldo Emerson in “The Obituary,” Oscar Wilde and Confucius in “Murder’s for the Birds,” Edward Cook in “Happy New Year, Aunt Carrie,” and Machiavelli in “A Game Of Hearts” and “The Trial” among others ). At the end of each half-hour *Evil Touch*, Anthony Quayle (again behind the superimposed blue wisps of smoke) would remind audiences that “there is ... a touch of evil ... in everyone.” Then, as he walked away, he would turn back to the audience and offer them “pleasant dreams.” In some stories, such as “Wings of Death,” “Scared to Death,” and “The Obituary,” host Quayle would also interrupt at the mid-point of the half-hour to bring viewers up to date on the story, or to offer an important tidbit of data regarding the adventure.

### HISTORY

*The Evil Touch* could very well be called the horror anthology that slipped through the cracks of time. In almost thirty years, virtually nothing substantive has been written about this 26-episode, 30-minute TV series. What has been written is often wrong or woefully incomplete. For instance, the series has variously been referred to as being of Canadian<sup>1</sup> or British<sup>2</sup> origin, when in fact *The Evil Touch* was produced down under, in Sydney, Australia. Since it is unlikely that there will ever be a reference book regarding “Australian Horror TV Series,” the author has decided to include *The Evil Touch* in this work. That is not as strange a decision as one might guess, however, since *The Evil Touch* did air

on American TV in 1973 (though it was produced and shot in 1972), and did regularly feature popular American stars. *Space: 1999* (1975-77), the Gerry Anderson Gothic space opera and a British-grown production, is also mentioned in this text (Part II, "If It Looks Like Horror...") because it too was designed for the American market.

All that established, the history of *The Evil Touch* is best begun with a bit of legislation. The Prime Time Access Rule, a Federal Communications Commission 1970 ordinance (fully enforced as of 1971), specified that U.S. local television affiliates had to feature at least one-half hour of original, non-network programming (and no more than three hours of network material) per night. The purpose of this rule was to shatter the network monopoly on prime airtime, and simultaneously create a new and free market for independent producers. Since these TV shows were to be produced independently, out-of-network so-to-speak, most had to be made very inexpensively.

Today, all this seems routine, and the airwaves are currently dominated by syndicated hits like *Earth: The Final Conflict* (1997-?), *Wheel of Fortune*, and *Entertainment Tonight*. Back in 1971, however, this FCC ruling created a sort of affiliate "panic," and non-network series from around the globe were gobbled up to fill the gap necessitated by U.S. government regulation. In some cases, cheap, original syndicated series such as the Canadian-produced Sam Groom, Jack Albertson vehicle *Dr. Simon Locke* (1971-74) and the Harlan Ellison space-opera *The Starlost* (1973) were born. In other cases, higher-budgeted British programming such as Gerry Anderson's *UFO* (1969-70) and *The Protectors* (1973) were aired. Like these foreign series aired on local American stations, *The Evil Touch* profited from this arrangement, and it found favor in a Sunday night time-slot in New York. It aired on Channel 7, the tri-state area ABC affiliate station, at 10:30 PM. It followed *The ABC Sunday Night Movie*, and competed against local news on NBC (Channel 4) and the aforementioned Gerry Anderson series *The Protectors* (starring Robert Vaughn and Tony Anholt) on CBS (Channel 2).

*The Evil Touch*, like *Dr. Simon Locke*, was extremely low budget, and it was designed to cash in not just on the Prime Time Access ruling, but the then-current popularity of supernatural programming on American TV. When *The Evil Touch* lensed in Australia in 1972, American networks were also sponsoring the runs of *Rod Serling's Night Gallery*, *Ghost Story/Circle of Fear*, and *The Sixth Sense*. In addition, *The Night Stalker* had become the highest-rated TV movie of all time. Considering the popularity in syndication of older horror-oriented standards such as *The Outer Limits*, *The Twilight Zone*, and *One Step Beyond* (1959-61), *The Evil Touch* came at a good time.

Lending further support to the series was the presence of the internationally renowned Anthony Quayle as its host. Quayle had done a similar hosting stint on *The Six Wives of Henry VIII* (1971) on CBS, and starred in his own NBC detective show, *Strange Report* (as Adam Strange) during the same year. And, to assure a broad international appeal, *The Evil Touch* featured a bevy of American television stars. These celebrities, most of whom spent two weeks "vacationing" in Australia and shot two episodes each, could relax and party "down under" at the same time they appeared in the show. Darren (*Kolchak*) McGavin appeared in (and directed) three episodes: "Gornak's Prism," "A Game of Hearts," and "George." Other American stars to visit the horror series included veterans Robert Lansing (*87th Precinct* [1961-62], *Twelve O'Clock High* [1964-67], *The Man Who Never Was* [1966-67], *Automan* [1983-84]) in "The Lake" and "Seeing Is Believing"; Mildred Natwick (*The Doctors* [1952-53], *Pulitzer Prize Playhouse* [1950-52], *Suspense* [1948-64], *The Snoop Sisters* [1973-74]) in "Scared to Death" and "Heart to Heart"; Leslie Nielsen (*The Explorers* [1972-73], *The New Breed* [1961-62], *Police Squad* [1982]) in "The Voyage" and "The Obituary"; Harry Guardino (*The Reporter*

[1965], *Perry Mason* [1973-74]) in “They” and “The Homecoming”; Vic Morrow (*Combat* [1962-67], *Captains and the Kings* [1976-77], *B.A.D. Cats* [1980]) in “Murder’s for the Birds” and “The Fans”; Carol Lynley (*The Immortal* [1970-71]) in “Dear Cora, I’m Going to Kill You” and “Death by Dreaming”; Kim Hunter (*Planet of the Apes* [1968], *Actors Studio* [1948-50], *Ford Theater* [1949-57], *The Kaiser Aluminum Hour* [1956-57]) in “Dr. McDermitt’s New Patients” and “Wings of Death”; Julie Harris (*Goodyear TV Playhouse* [1951-60], *Thicker Than Water* [1973], *The Family Holvak* [1975]) in “The Upper Hand” and “Happy New Year, Aunt Carrie”; and Ray Walston (*My Favorite Martian* [1963-66], *Picket Fences* [1992-96]) in “The Trial” and “Dear Beloved Monster.” These well-known stars, many of whom had appeared on *Night Gallery* or *Ghost Story*, were buttressed by Australian cast members in supporting roles.

The directing on *The Evil Touch* was handled almost exclusively by American producer Mende Brown and Arthur Luddenham, except for those instances in which Darren McGavin and Vic Morrow helmed their own episodes, and the writing duties were managed almost totally by unknowns. Despite the on-screen talent displayed, *The Evil Touch* was rarely reviewed during its original off-network run, and its low-budget quality may have been a factor in its quick demise. The series began its run in Australia in the summer of 1973, and its American run during the fall of the same year. The airdates indicated in the episode guide below reflect the airdates of the Channel 7 (ABC) New York City run. Some data (such as writing and directing credits) are still missing on a few of these programs, and it is sometimes hard to determine which actor plays which role in many episodes because the end credits do not provide character names. For purposes of this book, the author was able to procure and view 17 episodes of the series, and piece the rest together from existing sources ... but there are still gaps, at least until someone steps up to write the definitive *The Evil Touch* companion.

Following cancellation, Anthony Quayle moved on to bigger and better things. He appeared in the mini-series *Moses—The Lawgiver* in 1975, and won an Emmy for outstanding single performance by a supporting actor in a comedy or drama special for the ABC 1975 movie special *QB VII*. As for *The Evil Touch*, it was not seen again in America for over 15 years, but muddy-looking reruns of some shows have since turned up on the cable channel Bravo, and cleaner, clearer prints have occasionally shown up on Nickelodeon’s *TV Land* as part of a Halloween “horrorthon.” The series is distributed by Allied Artists, Viacom, and Paramount television.

## CRITICAL COMMENTARY

For all of its obvious cheapness, *The Evil Touch* is a strangely effective horror anthology. It is unabashedly low-budget, and it tends to go for gut-wrenching visceral horror rather than the more intellectual brand popularized by *The X-Files*, *Poltergeist: The Legacy*, *Twin Peaks* or other American entries. Nonetheless, *The Evil Touch* is a powerful and frightening entry in the valhalla of modern horror television. Consider, for instance, the story called “A Game of Hearts” written by Michael Fisher and starring Darren McGavin. On the surface, the story is vehemently antirational and makes not even a modicum of sense. To wit: a publicity-seeking heart surgeon (McGavin) is terrorized by an inexplicably living donor whose heart he has transplanted to another patient. The donor (named “Skorzeny” after the vampire McGavin faced down in *The Night Stalker*) pursues McGavin so he, in turn, can steal the surgeon’s heart and fill the gap in his chest. McGavin is thus pursued through a creaky, dark house as the bandaged, heavily-accented Skorzeny endlessly croaks “Dok-tor!!” in a throaty, grating voice. The episode ends as McGavin falls into an empty grave, and Skorzeny catches him. “I ... want... your ... heart!” the specter declares as the screen goes black. Then, generating

goosebumps aplenty, a thumping heart-beat is heard on the soundtrack.

Certainly “A Game of Hearts” is not a particularly inventive, original, or cerebral horror story, but it is terrifying in a primitive, energetic way. It recalls a campfire story: nonsensical in plot yet oddly disturbing and powerful, like something straight from our subconscious nightmares. Indeed, there is more vinegar and energy to be found here in *The Evil Touch* than in the lethargic, big-budgeted *Ghost Story*.

In fairness, the stories of *The Evil Touch* are sometimes more thematically complex than “A Game of Hearts.” One of the best is “Kadaitcha Country” by Ron McLean. It stars Leif Erickson as a Christian missionary who is sent to aborigine country and almost immediately confronted with a powerful, native God—the Kadaitcha—who can bend time and space and deliver death by the mere pointing of an animal bone. The stubborn missionary argues, in vain, that the existence of a creature like the Kadaitcha is flatly impossible, but as the episode’s text nicely points out, so is the parting of the Red Sea or any other miracle in conventional Christianity. Thus the story is really and truly about the hypocrisy of modern organized religion, and the ways in which these “accepted” Christian views are as primitive as those beliefs which modern dogma terms “pagan.” Like the best of the original *Twilight Zone* episodes, “Kadaitcha Country” presents all sides of the issue, and then gets out of Dodge ... with virtually no explanation or rationalizing of the preceding story.

Adding dimensions to this story, the desert where the events of “Kadaitcha Country” occur is so forbidding that hallucinations are known to take hold of a man there, and never let go of his psyche. Also, the protagonist, that stubborn Christian missionary, has a not-so-secret history of mental illness. Thus the story could be interpreted in a number of ways, depending on how the viewer is inclined to look at it. “Kadaitcha Country” is either about self-doubt, the harshness of nature, or something much more grim: the dominion of an ancient all-powerful creature beyond human understanding. The effectiveness of the “Kadaitcha Country” installment is buttressed in no small part by the authentic desert locations: the story looks and feels uncomfortably real. It was lensed with the cooperation of the Lardil aboriginal tribe of Mornington Island, and not many genre shows can make that unique claim. In short, “Kadaitcha Country” represents televised horror at its best. It asks viewers questions about reality, and manages to shake audience confidence in what it thinks it knows for certain and often takes for granted.

Unique settings distinguish many of *The Evil Touch* entries. “The Trial” by Michael Fisher was filmed on location in a run-down, oceanside amusement park in the middle of impenetrable night, and it was populated by an assortment of dwarves, strong men, and other “freaks” of nature. It too was a chilling story that worked on a basic, instinctual “fear response” level. In “The Trial,” the rich and callous character played by Ray Walston, once a circus freak himself, is pursued through this nightmare carnival world and eventually lobotomized by a discredited brain surgeon who now works as a tattoo artist. “The Trial” asked and then answered the question: How does it feel to be *really* afraid? A panicked Ray Walston expressed the answer, again in hard-hitting, fear-inducing terms.

“The Voyage” starred Leslie Nielsen and was set almost totally aboard a beautiful, 70-year-old sailing ship at sea. The ship was a “death ship,” a haunted vessel with a history of destruction and evil. A worker died cutting down the first piece of lumber used to assemble the ship. Later there was a slave revolt aboard. After that, the entire crew disappeared, and so forth. As the tale begins, six passengers who do not quite trust one another find themselves aboard this ship, surrounded on all sides by the deep blue sea. Though “The Voyage” ended badly when the sinking ship was visualized by a plastic



model kit, the story is nonetheless gripping and interesting, in the vein of *Dead Calm* (1989) or other ocean-bound horror stories.

*The Evil Touch* regularly tackled simple fears with a beautiful, almost elegant, bluntness. Desperate parents searched for missing children in strange lands in “Wings of Death” and “They.” In both cases, local customs and the language barrier heightened the anxiety of that universally feared situation: the disappearance of a child. Long-hidden personal secrets and failings were revealed to dramatic and traumatic effect by the grim dead in the frantic “The Obituary,” and “Marci” concerned a life-and-death struggle against a psychotic, superintelligent teenager. Other interesting tales on *The Evil Touch* included “Happy New Year, Aunt Carrie,” a suspenseful reworking of *Rear Window* (1954) with a wheelchair-bound woman witnessing a murder across the street, and “The Fans” (directed by Vic Morrow) which saw a horror movie icon, Purvis Green (star of such films as *Son of the Sylvania Werewolf* and *Trap Door of the Vampires*) being captured by two Bible-thumping fanatics. Each of these stories is told in direct, blunt, low-budget fashion ... but they are also energetic, fast-paced, and anxiety-provoking.

A uniquely different story for *The Evil Touch* is “Gornak’s Prism,” another tale that could have come straight from *The Twilight Zone*. The oft-beleaguered Darren McGavin plays a bored husband whose lust for variety and spice backfires in a most unpleasant way. It is the old “be careful what you wish for” chestnut (most recently seen in *Wes Craven Presents Wishmaster* [1997]), but it is well-told, droll, and well-acted.

Despite these interesting entries, *The Evil Touch* falls into some unfortunate patterns. The series features too many stories in which young playboys plot to rid themselves of rich old (female) relatives. “Murder’s for the Birds,” “Scared to Death,” and “Heart to Heart” cover this ground with little differentiation. Attempts to get away with a perfect crime inform “The Upper Hand,” “Never Fool with a Gypsy Icon,” “George,” and “The Lake.” The low-budget is sometimes all-too visible as well, particularly in “Death by Dreaming,” in which star Carol Lynley is shown superimposed over second-unit location footage of New York City and Coney Island. Yet, when *The Evil Touch* is really bad, it is not out of laziness or repetition, but, rather commendably, out of ambition. One of the weakest episodes is entitled “Campaign ’20,” and it is *The Evil Touch*’s only foray into futurism and science fiction. In this story, a ruthless politician played by James Daly accidentally erases himself from history by sending an irresistible male robot back in time to woo his competitor’s mother, and thus prevent his birth. Of course, things go wrong, and the robot romances Daly’s mother instead. This story, which forecasted *The Terminator*, suffers from its low-budget ... an example where *The Evil Touch*’s reach surpasses its low-budget grasp. The future of “Campaign ’20” is dramatized with stark white suits, plastic “modern” furniture, minimalist wall decorations, and so-forth ... all rather dreary and cliché accouterments.

Worse, this story fails to convince conceptually. As “Campaign ’20” reaches its conclusion, a cohort of Daly’s politician watches Daly’s “erasure” from the flow of time, and smiles ... realizing he will be the new candidate for president. The problem is this: if Daly’s character were erased from time, the entire time line would be different, and Daly’s cohort would have no knowledge of either Daly or his time machine. Although Quayle’s closing narration attempts to explain this temporal paradox, it remains an oversight. Still, “Campaign ’20” is really the exception rather than the rule on *The Evil Touch*.

Binding this Australian series together is the sardonic, low-key Quayle, and his well-delivered narrations are often interesting, and frequently literate. In two-dozen stories, Quayle manages to quote Machiavelli, Edward Cook, Oscar Wilde, William Shakespeare (*The Tempest*), Confucius, and others ... proving that *The Evil Touch* creators at least have a sense of history and a working knowledge of literature.

Although widely derided as “embarrassing” because of its cheapness, *The Evil Touch* works more often than not. Its grainy look, basic stories and outstanding lead performances suggest a low-grade transmission straight from hell. The series is resolutely styleless (though split screens were used in “Murder’s for the Birds,” slow motion photography was utilized in “Happy New Year, Aunt Carrie,” and freeze frames were deployed in “Heart to Heart”) but this fact is not really a problem or impediment to an enjoyment of the show. Style would only have interfered with the terror; style would have distanced one from the visceral horror of the streamlined stories.

In the final analysis, *The Evil Touch* does sometimes touch quite a bit: it reaches down into the well of human fears and for a spine-tingling 30 minutes refuses to let go of that fear. This is the series that the more-expensive *Ghost Story* could have been: blunt, brutal, and basic, but occasionally (as in the case of “Kadaitcha Country”) brilliant.

## CAST AND CREDITS

*Cast:* Anthony Quayle (Your Host).

*Credits:* An Allied Artists Television Presentation. *Executive Producer:* Everett Rosenthal. *Producer:* Mende Brown. *Associate Producer:* John Daniell. *In Charge of Production:* Peter Appleton. *Director of Photography:* Paul Onorato. *Camera Assistant:* Calvin Gardiner. *Music:* Laurie Lewis. *For the Producer:* John Brothers. *Supervising Editor:* Stanley Moore. *Film Editors:* Anthony Buckley, Richard Hindley, Lyn Tunbridge. *Sound Supervisor:* Les McKenzie. *Recordist:* Don Connolly. *Boom Operator:* Joe Spinelli. *Post-Production Mixer:* Alan Allen. *Sound Editor:* Ken Malcolm. *Production Coordinator:* Pamela Bornin. *Continuity:* Moya Icton. *Makeup:* Patricia Gunliffe. *Gaffer:* Warren Moarns. *Electrician:* Mike Nelson. *Grip:* Keith Holloway. *Design:* Bob Hildith. *Prop Buyer:* Jan Holloway. *Set Construction:* John Denton. *Stuntwork:* Peter Armstrong. *Unit Manager:* John Wall. *Wardrobe:* Heather Armstrong. *Cars:* Courtesy of Chrysler-Australia, Ltd. *Accommodations:* Sebel Townhouse, Sydney, Australia. An Amalgamated Picture Australasia Production, in association with Olala Productions.

## EPISODE GUIDE

**1. “The Lake”** Written by Robert Earll and R. David McGonagle; Directed by Mende Brown; airdate: September 16, 1973; *Guest Cast:* Robert Lansing (Arthur Randall); Anne Hardy (Ellen Randall); Ann Bowden (Sylvia).

Arthur Randall is unhappy in his marriage of two decades and he seeks a divorce from his obnoxious wife ... but Mrs. Randall is uncooperative. Desperate to marry another woman, Arthur fails to save his wife during a swimming accident, and she drowns. Soon, however, he learns that hell hath no fury like a woman murdered.

**2. “Heart to Heart”** Written by Q. Moonblood; Directed by Mende Browne; airdate: September 23,

1973; *Guest Cast*: Mildred Natwick (Auntie); Peter Sumner (Richard); Brian Wenzel (Mr. Jacobs); Lynne Murphy (Mrs. Jacobs).

While a homicidal serial killer called the Monster of Manchester roams the countryside, a spoiled playboy named Richard learns he is to be excluded from his dying aunt's will once her attorney returns from a weekend trip. Realizing he must act fast, Richard plots to scare his aunt to death on the long way home from her weekly bridge game, using the Monster as a cover. Unfortunately, Richard's aunt has already come up with a plan of her own.

**3. "Dr. McDermitt's New Patients"** Directed by Mende Brown; airdate: September 30, 1973; *Guest Cast*: Richard Lupino (Tom McDermitt); Kim Hunter (Jill McDermitt); Pandora Bronsen (Nona).

In need of new patients, a strange doctor and his even stranger sister resort to robbing graves at a local cemetery.

**4. "The Obituary"** Written by Michael Fisher; directed by Arthur Luddenham; airdate: October 7, 1973; *Guest Cast*: Leslie Nielsen (William Tremaine); John Morris (Jack Pettet); June Thody; Reg Evans; Carole Skinner; Larry Gregory.

Seven years ago, pilot Willie Tremaine was drunk when his plane crashed and 53 passengers were killed. Today, a crippled reporter named Pettet who has hounded Tremaine ever since the accident presents Tremaine with his own obituary and the frightening news that a vengeful maniac, Henderson, is coming for Tremaine's wife Susan and son Billy to balance the scales of justice.

**5. "Happy New Year, Aunt Carrie"** Written by Michael Fisher; Directed by Eric Fullilove; airdate: October 14, 1973; *Guest Cast*: Julie Harris (Carolyn "Carrie" Crawley); Kevin Miles (Frank Bigelow); Rory Tocchi (David); Regina Tocchi (Rosie); Doreen Warburton (Partygoer); Les Berryman; John Llewelyn.

On New Year's Eve, a wheelchair-bound journalist named Carrie witnesses a murder in the apartment complex across the street. Carrie, who is taking care of her niece Rosie and nephew David for the evening, realizes that the shooter, Frank Bigelow, has also seen her, and he soon lays siege to her home.

**6. "A Game of Hearts"** Written by Michael Fisher; Directed by Darren McGavin; airdate: October 21, 1973; *Guest Cast*: Darren McGavin (Dr. Thomas Sullivan); Colin Croft (Richard); Judi Farr (Mrs. Anne Sullivan); Ryan Nicholl; Lex Mitchell; Johnny Lockwood; Miriam Lee.

Dr. Thomas Sullivan is asked by hospital administration to perform an experimental heart transplant. Though Sullivan has doubts—especially because the heart donor, Mr. Skorzeny, does not appear to be dead yet—he goes ahead with the procedure so his work can continue. After the operation is a success, Mr. Skorzeny returns from the dead, seeking a heart in replacement for the one Sullivan took from him.

**7. "Seeing Is Believing"** Directed by Mende Brown; airdate: October 28, 1973; *Guest Cast*: Robert Lansing (Archie MacGauffin); John Derum (Charlie); Alfred Sandor (Inspector Williams).

An actor, Archie MacGauffin, starring in a horror movie is chagrined when he learns that he has

managed to summon a real monster to the set of his latest picture.

**8. “The Upper Hand”** Written by Mel Brez and Ethel Brez; Directed by Mende Brown; airdate: November 4, 1973; *Guest Cast:* Julie Harris (Jenny, the Maid); Peter Gwynne (Roger Carlyle); June Salter (Louise Carlyle).

Another tale of murder, revenge, and blackmail when a husband’s “perfect” murder of his wife goes awry, and his maid proves to be a troubling witness.

**9. “Murder’s for the Birds”** Written by Michael Fisher; From a Story by Don Haberman; Directed by Mende Brown; airdate: November 11, 1973; *Guest Cast:* Vic Morrow (Harold Palmerest); Neva Carr Glyn (Cousin Lilly); Tony Wager; Lyn James; Nat Levison.

Spoiled playboy Harold Palmerest is turning 40 and he hates depending on his wealthy but sick old cousin Lilly for sustenance. When she suffers a mild heart attack, Harold gets the idea to poison her and claim that her weak heart was at fault. Harold’s plan comes off almost perfectly, but Lilly’s cockatoo, Radcliffe, witnessed the murder and won’t stop squawking about it!

**10. “Marci”** written by Virginia Bell; with additional material by Ron McLean; directed by Mende Brown; airdate: November 18, 1973; *Guest Cast:* Susan Strasberg (Elisabeth Quinton); Peter Gwynne (John Quinton); Elisabeth Crosby (Marci Quinton).

A jealous young girl named Marci rebels against Elisabeth, her father’s new bride. Marci is a terribly possessive 14-year-old who Elisabeth suspects may have killed her own natural mother when she learned of her pregnancy. Marci makes repeated attempts to murder Elisabeth by throwing her down the stairs on a dark night, and injuring her in a horseback riding incident, but Elisabeth soon turns the tables.

**11. “George”** Directed by Darren McGavin; airdate: November 25, 1973; *Guest Cast:* Darren McGavin; Jack Thomson; Shirley Cameron.

Terror and insanity strikes a “grieving” husband as he begins to have visions of his recently dead wife, returned to life.

**12. “Scared to Death”** Written by Mel Brez and Ethel Brez; Directed by Mende Brown; airdate: December 2, 1973; *Guest Cast:* Mildred Natwick (Constance); Jack Thomson (Evan); Arna-Maria Winchester (Jeanette); Ben Gabriel (Dr. Phillips).

Evan is married to the elderly Constance, a sick old woman whose fortune he hopes to inherit. When Evan’s young love (Connie’s nurse) is caught in their home, she hides in the closet, and Constance orders Evan to build a brick wall over the door to trap her inside the tiny closet ... forever.

**13. “The Homecoming”** airdate: December 9, 1973; *Guest Cast:* Harry Guardino; Elaine Lee; Mike Dorsey.

In idyllic Flatt Junction, a combination of unfortunate circumstances leads to a mob mentality and eventually to murder.

**14. “Dear Beloved Monster”** airdate: December 16, 1973; *Guest Cast:* Ray Walston; Alistair Duncan;

Jan Kingsbury; Mark Hashfield.

An ambitious scientist creates a murderous monster which he is soon put in the position of having to protect and cover for.

**15. “Campaign ’20”** Written by Linda Stewart; Directed by Mende Brown; airdate: January 13, 1974; *Guest Cast:* James Daly (David Arlington Zack); Carmen Duncan; Tony Bonner; Jeff Ashley; Peter Summer; Ken Goodlet; Judy Lynn; John Winston.

In the year 2020, David Zack, a scientific genius running a losing campaign to win the presidency of the United States, decides on a strange way to eliminate his political opponent. He has invented a time machine, and he sends an irresistibly attractive humanoid robot back to the year 1972 to prevent his opponent’s parents from meeting and falling in love. Unfortunately for Zack, it is his own history, not opponent Peter Day’s, that is put into jeopardy.

**16. “Faulkner’s Choice”** Directed by Mende Brown; airdate: January 20, 1974; *Guest Cast:* Noel Harrison, Edward Howell, Peter Reynolds.

A dilatory and aimless young man is given a strange inheritance by his grandfather. This inheritance includes the key to a safe, and a horrible “treasure” within.

**17. “Dear Cora, I’m Going to Kill You”** Directed by Mende Brown; airdate: January 27, 1974; *Guest Cast:* Carol Lynley; Charles McCallum, Dennis Clinton.

A “Dear Abby”-style newspaper journalist is terrorized by a letter-writing fan with a penchant for violence and a flair for murder.

**18. “The Trial”** Written by Michael Fisher; Directed by Mende Brown; airdate: February 3, 1974; *Guest Cast:* Ray Walston (Lon Zachary/Elmo the Geek); Reg Midway (Colonel Broom); Willie Fennell (Doc); Neva Carr Glyn (Rhonda); Wendy Playfair; John Armstrong; Queenie Ashton; Dennis Clinton; Horst Pladdics; Jim Maham.

A nasty millionaire, Lon Zachary, is abducted by the angry circus freaks who took him in twenty years ago and treated him as family. Since then, Lon (once Elmo the Geek) has scorned the carnies and gone so far as to sell their land at the old amusement park so condominiums can be put up! The circus denizens put Zachary on trial for his evil deeds, but the tattoo artist ... once a brain surgeon ... suggests a unique plea bargain that could save Zachary’s life.

**19. “The Fans”** Written by Ron McLean; Directed by Vic Morrow; airdate: February 10, 1974; *Guest Cast:* Vic Morrow (Purvis Green); Alfred Sandor (Simon Harris); Enid Lorimer (Livinia Pfeiffer); Elisabeth Pfeiffer (Queenie Ashton); Mike Dorsey; Kevin Howard.

An egotistical horror film star visits the home of two old women, longtime fans, as part of a publicity stunt to bring attention to eight new television movies in production. The old sisters drug the celebrity to keep him at their home, and they make him a permanent part of their collection in hopes that he will repent his “evil” ways.

**20. “Kadaitcha Country”** Written by Ron McLean; Directed by Mende Brown; airdate: February 24,

1974; *Guest Cast*: Leif Erickson (Reverend Vincent); Rowena Wallace (Nurse Jean Lewis); Tony Bonner; Jack Thompson; Tony Wager; Lindsey Roughsey.

Reverend Vincent, a Christian missionary recovering from a nervous breakdown, flies to the barren Australian desert and runs afoul of an aborigine tribe which worships the Kadaitcha: a powerful God-entity who can control life and death, hop dimensions at will, and even alter the flow of time. Terrorized by a series of frightening hallucinations, Vincent fights for the soul of a young nurse when Kadaitcha tries to claim her.

**21. “Gornak’s Prism”** Written by Jerome Coopersmith; Directed by Darren McGavin; airdate: March 3, 1974; *Guest Cast*: Darren McGavin (Alvin); Kathie Brown (The Many Faces of Selma); Joseph Furst (Dr. Leopold Gornak).

Alvin is bored with his marriage to the lovely but dull Selma. He visits Dr. Gornak, who shows him a strange device: a glass prism which reveals the infinite aspects of every woman. Alvin uses the prism on Selma, but finds that with infinite aspects and variety also comes infinite danger.

**22. “The Voyage”** Written by Robert Earll; Directed by Mende Brown; airdate: March 10, 1974; *Guest Cast*: Leslie Nielsen (Captain Andrew Palmer); Jill Forster (Marge Palmer); Terence Cooper (Craig Larson); Patricia Leehy (Pamela Larson); Deryck Barnes (John Gavin); Maggi Gray (Gail Wilson).

A beautiful sailing ship called the *Endeavor*, which has been in dry dock for 70 years, sets sail for Tahiti with six people aboard. Once en route, the crew discovers that the *Endeavor* is a death ship—known also as *The Black Cloud* and the *Vengeance*. The ship has killed all of its previous passengers and crews, and will continue to do so until it is destroyed itself. At first, Captain Andrew Palmer hopes to bleed riches from the ship, but soon realizes that no accommodations can be made with evil.

**23. “Death by Dreaming”** Written by Mel Goldberg and Arthur H. Singer; Directed by Mende Brown; airdate: March 24, 1974; *Guest Cast*: Carol Lynley (Edie); Sandy Harbutt; Owen Weingott; Ken Lawrence; Dennis Grosvenor.

After a night at Coney Island, Edie experiences a vision in which her twin sister Norma is strangled to death by a popular rock star known to be involved in the drug scene. Edie returns home to find the vision is true, and then sets out to stop the murderer.

**24. “Never Fool with a Gypsy Icon”** Written by Larry Spiegel; Directed by Mende Brown; airdate: March 31, 1974; *Guest Cast*: Ralph Meeker (Frank Draker); Harry Lawrence; Don Philips; Tom Farley; Kay Taylor; Brian Wenzel; Sylvia Silk.

A murderer, Frank Draker, and a petty thief, Gene Benton, escape from prison and attempt to cross the border. They stop briefly at a gypsy camp and Frank steals a gypsy icon called St. Martia: a statuette that is said to represent the angel of death and provide eternal retribution for those who fool with it. Frank murders Gene and the gypsies, and then hops a train across the border, but he soon finds eternal retribution is a real bitch.

**25. “They”** Written by Norman Thaddeus Vane; Directed by Mende Brown; airdate: June 2, 1974; *Guest Cast*: Harry Guardino (Dr. Fenton); Alexandria Hynes (Lydia); Paul Anker, Glenn Ella, Jenny

Brooks, Anna Harbo, Mark Leo, Wes Skanney (They); Stephen DeCarterett; Tim Elliott; Peter Reynolds.

Dr. Fenton, a scientist advocating birth control to end overpopulation, must fight for the life of his young son, Peter, when the boy is apprehended by a strange cult operating out of a lighthouse on the moors. The cult, the Children of the New Order, is led by the beautiful but dangerous Lydia ... a strange adolescent who has the power to control minds and turn men and women into animals.

**26. "Wings of Death"** Written by Mel Brez and Ethel Brez; Directed by Mende Brown; airdate June 9, 1974; *Guest Cast:* Kim Hunter (Mrs. Emily Webber); Don Reid (Mr. Gordon Webber).

A dream vacation to Central America turns to terror for the Webber family when young Scott disappears during a short ride on a merry-go-round. Desperate, his parents scour the countryside for the missing Scott, enlisting the help of a local law enforcement official named Ortega. After several traumatic experiences, including a car collision and a deadly encounter with a sniper, the Webbers learn that Scott has been abducted to serve as a human sacrifice in a strange native ritual in which an Eagle-like God demands blood.

## ***Kolchak: The Night Stalker (1974–1975)***

### **CRITICAL RECEPTION**

“The best horror series to ever appear on TV.... Often criticized for not having terribly believable monsters, the strong points of the series were excellent writing, terrific characterizations played to perfection by an admirable cast, and an offbeat premise ... a cult classic.”—William E. Anchors, *Epilog* #36, November 1993, page 23.

“the basic problem with the *Night Stalker* series was the problem which dogs any non-anthology series dealing with the supernatural or the occult: the complete breakdown in the ability to suspend disbelief ... I suspect that people tuned in ... couldn’t believe how bad this thing was, and kept tuning in on successive nights to make sure that their eyes had not deceived them.”—Stephen King, *Danse Macabre*, page 237.

“Much of the initial charm of *The Night Stalker* was due to the contrast between Kolchak, the cynical wisecracking newsman, and the fantastic evil he was required to face.... But after a while it became a bit of a strain to have this man ... willing to go out and do battle with another supernatural creature every week—so the stories became more and more bizarre.... It was that hip, slightly cynical and frayed-at-the edges quality of Kolchak that made the series memorable.”—Berthe Roeger, *Fangoria*: #3: “*Kolchak: The Night Stalker*,” 1979, page 39.

“entertaining and atmospheric, but too unvarying in its rigidly formulaic stories.”—John Clute and Peter Nicholls, *The Encyclopedia of Science Fiction*, 1993, page 675.

“a rousing success ... Darren McGavin at last came into his own as the rebellious occult investigator hero. Fine continuing performances were delivered by Simon Oakland ... Ruth McDevitt ... Jack Grinnage.”—Larry James Gianakos, *Television Drama Series Programming: A Comprehensive Chronicle (1959–1975)*, page 768.

“a lumpy mixture of nutty farce and ominous terror.”—John J. O’Connor, *The New York Times*: “*The Night Stalker*,” September 13, 1974, page 73.

“These creatures were ... never half as ruthless as Kolchak himself. For one thing, the journalist disregarded the law entirely.... If he learned ... that a fellow passenger on a cruise was a werewolf, due process of the law be damned: Kolchak shot him with a silver bullet ... Kolchak also invaded private property and flung accusations at anyone whom he thought might be covering a monster.... Even if the viewer was hard-pressed to tolerate, let alone *like* Kolchak ... it is significant that he could be so unattractive and still exist as the central character.”—Jeff Rovin, *The Great Television Series*.

“The series brims with ideas, and was ahead of its time in many respects.... There were numerous witty moments to give light relief from the tense storyline ... the series is witty, tense and wonderful stuff.”—Stephen G. Liddle, *TV Zone*: “*Kolchak: Things That Go Bump in the Night*,” November 1992.

“One fond memory of the show is all the press conferences that Kolchak used to attend. Officials



hated him because he kept going, ‘Now what about these five deaths, how do you explain them.’ He was sort of like Sam Donaldson as a ghostbuster.”—David Bianculli, *The New York Post* (from *Critics’ Choice: The Best of Crime and Detective TV*, Harmony Books, 1988).

## FORMAT

Reporter Carl Kolchak (Darren McGavin) has no family, no taste for fashion, and he never gets to enjoy a night at home. What he does have, however, is an unerring instinct for a good story, and relentless investigative skills. Perhaps more importantly, Kolchak has the ability and drive to follow each lead to its ultimate truth ... even if that truth may be both unpalatable and unprintable.

In two television movies and 20 hour-long TV episodes, Kolchak finds himself pursuing great news stories and terrifying monsters. He might go aboard an ocean liner and discover a werewolf lurking on the promenade deck (“The Werewolf.”) He might visit a fashion show and unmask a witch coven (“The Trevi Collection.”) He might even suspect that a deadly female demon called a succubus is causing a rash of heart attacks among the all-American football stars at the local college (“Demon in Lace”).

Carl’s base of operations is the INS building in metropolitan Chicago, a seedy little wire service run by his friend and boss, Tony Vincenzo. Vincenzo is a loud, easily irritated man whom Kolchak just loves to torment. Sharing the newsroom with Kolchak and Vincenzo is the effete financial news writer Updyke (whom Kolchak always calls “Uptight”) and the elderly Miss Emily, who offers “Dear Abby”-style advice and crossword puzzles to her loyal readers.

To some degree, each and every episode of *Kolchak: The Night Stalker* is the same song, performed with mild variations. Carl investigates a series of crimes (usually murders) and learns that a mythical creature (a vampire, a zombie, or even Helen of Troy in “The Youth Killers”) is really responsible. In the process of getting his story, Kolchak inevitably angers Vincenzo, and absolutely infuriates local law enforcement officials, including Keenan Wynn’s recurring character. By the end of each hour, the monster is killed by Kolchak using a method he discovered during his research. Kolchak’s stories, alas, are too wild to be believed and are never printed. However, Kolchak tape records his stories, perhaps for future publication.

## HISTORY

Producer/director Dan Curtis is the man who kept terror television alive in the early-to-mid 1970s. Though he has since gone “legit,” guiding production of mini-series such as *The Winds of War* (1987) and its sequel, *War and Remembrance* (1990), he will probably always best be known for his memorable forays into horror. In 1966, he created *Dark Shadows*, a gothic daytime soap opera with a melancholy vampire for a star, and consequently generated a pop culture sensation which is still going strong to this day. There has been a *Dark Shadows* TV revival in 1991 and two feature films (*House of Dark Shadows* [1970], *Night of Dark Shadows* [1971]), and all 1,225 episodes of the series have been repeated perpetually on the Sci-Fi Channel. Beyond the impressive *Dark Shadows* phenomenon, Dan Curtis has given hungry horror fans a bevy of TV movies including *The Norliss Tapes* (1973) starring Roy Thinnes, *The Picture of Dorian Gray* (1973), *Scream of the Wolf* (1974), *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* (1974), *Trilogy of Terror* (1974) starring Karen Black, and *Dracula* (1975) with Jack Palance as Bram Stoker’s famous count.

As impressive as this resume remains, horror fans are perhaps most grateful to Dan Curtis for sponsoring another horror franchise: *Kolchak: The Night Stalker*. As the now-famous story goes, producer Curtis one day came across an unpublished manuscript by a reporter named Jeff Rice entitled *The Night Stalker*. This novel, which had repeatedly been rejected by various and sundry publishing houses, concerned reporter Carl Kolchak's thrilling (and terrifying) encounter with a modern day vampire in glitzy-by-day/seedy-by-night Las Vegas. Told in documentary, news-style format, with straight-faced, deadpan humor, and a journalist's eye for detail, the unpublished novel captured Curtis's imagination. He purchased the property and assigned frequent *Twilight Zone* scribe and *Ghost Story* (1972) creator Richard Matheson the duty of writing a teleplay. At this point, hopes were high that the television movie based on Rice's work would be a success, but nobody could have predicted what happened next. When *The Night Stalker* premiered on the night of January 11, 1972, it was the highest rated program of the evening. Better than that, it was the highest rated TV movie of the year! It received a staggering 33.1 rating and a 48 share of the audience. Twenty years later, in 1992, *The Night Stalker* was still considered a success, although it had fallen to 29th place in the intervening two decades.

The success of this horror telefilm was due in no small part to Darren McGavin's gritty, amusing portrayal of Carl Kolchak. An untraditional hero, McGavin's Kolchak was the perfect protagonist for his time: a little guy fighting the establishment (police, politicians, superiors at the Las Vegas Daily News) and the supernatural. In *The Night Stalker*, Kolchak was pitted against a vile vampire named Janos Skorzeny (Barry Atwater), a feral, superstrong monster who redefined the notion of the vampire. No longer an elegant seducer with Hungarian accent, this blood sucker was a barely-human, barely-rational silent thing at the whim of his insatiable hunger for blood. The TV movie, directed by John Llewelyn Moxey, accomplished the nearly impossible: it was genuinely scary and amusing at the same time.

After the debut of *The Night Stalker* on TV and in print, it became clear to the powers that be at the network (ABC) that a sequel was in order. *The Night Strangler*, written by Richard Matheson and directed by Dan Curtis, returned McGavin's eccentric newshawk crusader to the airwaves in January of 1973. This time, Kolchak confronted a madman in Seattle who was draining the vitality of young women so as to become immortal. The villain of the piece was played by Richard Anderson, who would soon become an American favorite on *The Six Million Dollar Man* and *Bionic Woman* (1976-78) series as OSI chief Oscar Goldman. The ratings for *The Night Strangler* were also very good, and a third TV movie, *The Night Walkers* (about robot doppelgangers) was written by Matheson and William F. Nolan.<sup>1</sup>

ABC had a change of heart, however, and determined that *The Night Stalker* should become a weekly TV series. Without the permission of *Kolchak* originator Jeff Rice, and without the participation of original producer Dan Curtis, that is exactly what happened. On April 25, 1974, ABC announced its plan to spin-off the *Night Stalker* TV movies into a regular weekly program come fall, along with new shows such as *Get Christie Love* starring Theresa Graves, *Harry O* starring David Janssen, and *Nakia* starring Robert Forster.<sup>2</sup> Because of outcries about violence on TV, the spin-off would air late in the evening (once the kiddies went to bed), at 10:00 PM on Fridays—the same timeslot which had killed off the original *Star Trek* in 1969. The Friday night slot was a bad move (as it had been for *Trek*) because most college-age viewers would be out on dates that night, not staying home and watching television. Adding to the confusion, *Kolchak: The Night Stalker* entered the rating sweepstakes at the same time that the similarly named *Kodiak* and *Kojak* were on the air. Those who wanted to watch the

series first had to find the right one.

Even before the debut of the first episode of *Kolchak* on Friday the 13th of September 1974 (the same night the TV version of *Planet of the Apes* premiered, incidentally) there were problems. Darren McGavin had signed on for the series and his production company, Francys, was producing the show in the absence of Curtis. The star, who had already contributed so much to the *Kolchak* mythos with his unique and memorable performance, fought weekly battles with ABC, parent studio Universal, and series producers about the scripts, the level of violence, and the very tone of the series itself. Although definitively a “horror” show, it became obvious that because of so many censorship restrictions on what could be dramatized, there was a limit to what could be done and shown on *Kolchak*. As McGavin described it:

Kolchak isn't a pure horror show, although it deals with man-killing monsters and creatures.... The simple fact is you can't do a legitimate “horror show” on network time, as the sponsors don't want to scare people.... So we decided to titillate, not terrify, to have fun with it.<sup>3</sup>

This approach was an interesting one: not quite tongue-in-cheek, but not quite somber either. The people/characters seen on *Kolchak* soon emerged as funny in a very real way, even though the situations they found themselves in were deadly serious. In some ways, this serio-comedic approach mirrored the one used by *M\*A\*S\*H* (1972–83), wherein the characters would cope with the “horror” of the Korean war by laughing out loud, sometimes at the absurdity of it all. Importantly, this was also an approach that attempted to reflect the full breadth of the human condition, particularly our unique ability to laugh/cry/scream all at the same time. *Kolchak* thus made a special point of characterizing each and every individual met by Carl as *real*. From officious university registrars (Carolyn Jones) to on-the-take morgue attendants (John Fiedler), the people of *Kolchak* felt real because they expressed sarcasm, humor, and wit in the face of weekly monstrosities. Although this individuality was and is beautifully done, there were those on the production team who felt humor was all wrong for a series like *Kolchak*. Cy Chermak, the producer who replaced Paul Playdon (who was reportedly bullied by the headstrong McGavin) had this to say about the humor factor:

If you're trying to sell the horror and scare people, the show must be firmly grounded in reality. The people had to be real and react in a real way. *Kolchak* is the *only* character who should have his feet not quite on the ground. How could you expect people to be seriously frightened by a monster if they couldn't believe all the other characters?<sup>4</sup>

Years later, this debate, which had been so heated, felt pretty inconsequential, even to the major participants. When interviewed about his role on the series, Playdon reported:

The arguments were over the type of humor being used. It's funny thinking back on the controversies over the show that went on at the time. To look at those episodes now, it's impossible to figure what all the fuss was about. Expenses were another problem—shooting at night is very costly, and so are effective special effects.<sup>5</sup>

As Playdon's comment hints at, *Kolchak*'s tone was not the series' only concern. The series was difficult to shoot because so many of the reporter's adventures took place in the dark of night. Additionally, the overall budget was minuscule to say the least, and it left no room to showcase particularly realistic monsters or special effects. And perhaps most damningly, nobody could seem to get around the restrictive, so-called monster of the week formula which saw *Kolchak* discovering and

killing a monster, installment after installment. Last minute tweaking of the teleplays by David Chase, Chermak, and McGavin himself made each episode clever and witty, but not particularly unique or imaginative.

After just 20 stories, *Kolchak: The Night Stalker* fell prey to all the pressures which surrounded it. In-fighting among producers and the star, a repetitive format, complicated shooting requirements, a low budget, a threatened lawsuit from writer Jeff Rice, who still maintained he had never authorized a *Kolchak* series, a bad time slot (against *Police Woman* [1974-78] and the CBS Friday night movie), and the so-called moral crusade against violence on the tube were all nails in *Kolchak's* coffin. The final blow was the fact that ABC's new programming executive, Fred Silverman, had a well-reported dislike for the fantastic or supernatural. Not surprisingly then, it was announced on May 3, 1975, that *Kolchak: The Night Stalker* had been canceled by ABC (along with *The Odd Couple* [1970-75], *Kung Fu* [1972-75], *Get Christie Love* [1975-75], *Karen* [1975], and *Caribe* [1975]).<sup>6</sup>

Even though *Kolchak* survived only one short season, anyone who had seen it remembered both its ironic humor, and Darren McGavin's individualistic lead performance. Soon after the TV series was canceled, two compilation movies (*Crackle of Death* and *The Demon and the Mummy*) were released in syndication, much to the delight of the ever-growing *Kolchak* cult. And, in 1979 and 1980, CBS reran the series as part of its late night schedule (11:30 PM). Not surprisingly, considering the high quality of the show, *Kolchak* broke ratings records for its time slot during this unexpected, but most welcome, second sortie. In the 1990s, *Kolchak* is still remembered fondly. It was rerun briefly on the Sci-Fi Channel, and all episodes are now available for purchase through the Columbia House "Collector's Edition." *The Night Stalker*, *The Night Strangler*, and *The Night Stalker: Two Tales of Terror* (featuring the episodes "The Vampire" and "The Ripper") are also available for purchase at most video retail stores.

*Kolchak: The Night Stalker* has also gained notoriety of late as the inspiration for Chris Carter's *The X-Files* (1993– ). Darren McGavin has even appeared on *The X-Files* and *Millennium* (as, of all things, Frank Black's father). Most recently, the Sci-Fi Channel aired a *Night Stalker* marathon on December 30, 1998.

Although there has recently been talk of a new *Kolchak* feature film (to include a new cast), no film has yet been forthcoming. Nick Nolte has reportedly been considered for the lead role begun so ably by McGavin, but this author offers another choice: How about James Wood, the lead actor of *John Carpenter's Vampires* (1998)?

## CRITICAL COMMENTARY

*Kolchak: The Night Stalker* is a fun, freaky, and occasionally frightening roller-coaster ride. It is an odd, but compelling, jumble of formula and innovation which manages, seemingly by sorcery, to overcome its cheap production values. Buttressed by Darren McGavin's lunatic and charismatic lead performance, *Kolchak* is one of the terror TV greats: a gutsy, go-for-the-throat horror excursion with heart to match its horror.

Amazingly, *Kolchak* is as rigidly formulaic as any latter-day James Bond motion picture. Each episode gives the audience essentially the same thing as far as story, and even specific plot details. To wit: in each installment *Kolchak* investigates a case which involves the supernatural or the paranormal. The show will open with *Kolchak's* narration into a tape recorder as he begins to recount

the gory details. There is a quick dissolve to a gruesome murder as an unsuspecting innocent is terrorized and killed by the supernatural monstrosity of the week. Kolchak then arrives on the scene, bickers with the police captain of the day (William Daniels in “The Vampire,” James Gregory in “They Have Been, They Are, They Will Be,” Keenan Wynn in “Demon in Lace,” and “The Spanish Moss Murders,” Larry Linville in “Chopper”). Carl then notices something strange about the corpses (vampire bites in “The Vampire,” a green leafy substance in “The Spanish Moss Murders,” chicken blood behind the ears in “Zombie”) which the police either failed to report, did not notice, or are hoping to keep secret. Kolchak proceeds to his seedy INS office to spar with Tony Vincenzo and the annoying Updyke before heading to the morgue to get more specific details from his informant, “Gordy the Ghoul” (John Fiedler).

Soon, more victims are being tallied and Kolchak will interrupt a crime in progress to take pictures, but his photographs never turn out (“The Ripper,” “They Have Been...”). Kolchak next consults with the experts in whatever field of study or mythology the monster of the week happens to be related to, whether it be witchcraft (“The Trevi Collection”), astronomy (“They Have Been...”) Far Eastern religion and myth (“Horror in the Heights”), Sumerian cuneiform (“Demon in Lace”), or even the French Revolution (“Chopper”). From this expert, Kolchak learns about the only method by which to kill the monster (electricity in “The Ripper,” a spear made from authentic bayou gumwood in “The Spanish Moss Murders,” the destruction of the temple in “The Youth Killer,” a reflection of ugliness and public accusation of witchcraft in “The Trevi Collection,” a stake through the heart in “The Vampire,” a silver bullet in “The Werewolf”). Of course, the police don’t believe Kolchak’s cockamamie stories or his crazy recipe for closure, and they fail to act to stop the murders. The audience then watches Kolchak drive his car (always at night) and in voice-over put the details of the case together. Finally, taking matters into his hands, Kolchak kills the monster in a final, frightening confrontation. Back at INS HQ, Vincenzo trashes Kolchak’s story as unbelievable or ridiculous, and Carl is left warning the audience to be on the lookout for more monsters like the one who terrorized Chicago *this week*.

This formula never wavered. Not even once. And, since network standards and practices allowed only a certain level of violence, the monster of the week was usually permitted only to throw people around on camera (“The Vampire,” “The Ripper,” “The Werewolf,” “The Zombie”). Though “Demon in Lace,” about a succubus, involved sex, and “Chopper” was driven by its endless decapitations, sex and violence were really only intimated, never shown.

Within this rigid outline, however, *Kolchak: The Night Stalker* dished out a kind of low-grade brilliance. Unlike virtually every genre series up to that time, *Kolchak* treated all the characters in Carl’s bizarre universe as individuals. These people were quirky, funny, and very real. Keenan Wynn’s recurring police captain was no ordinary TV cop: he was an impatient screamer undergoing group therapy for “anger management.” This fact led to a whole series of silly “I’m okay, you’re okay” parodies until Kolchak finally drove the poor man to backslide into an uncontrollable rage. The series was similarly littered with comic cameo appearances from celebrities such as Jim Backus (*Gilligan’s Island* [1964-67]) and Jay Robinson (*Dr. Shrinker* [1976-77]) in “Chopper”; Larry Storch (*F-Troop* [1965-67]) in “The Vampire”; Phil Silvers (*The Phil Silvers Show* [1955-59]) in “Horror in the Heights,” Stanley Adams (*Star Trek: “The Trouble with Tribbles”* [1967]) in “The Devil’s Platform”; Dick Van Patten (*Eight Is Enough* [1977-81]) in “They Have Been, They Are, They Will Be”; Carolyn Jones (*The Addams Family* [1964-66]) in “Demon in Lace”; and so on. Each of these comedy personalities was able to do something that straight dramatic actors may not have even considered

attempting on a “horror” show”—they imbued even the most unimportant people of Kolchak’s galaxy with a distinctive personality, a sense of humor, and rare individuality. This gave the series a feeling of verisimilitude and real life that remains unmatched by the more cookie-cutter-type of horror shows (such as *Friday the 13th: The Series*), where the guest actors exist primarily to advance the plot or convey exposition. The guests of *Kolchak* depict mood and cogently suggest a higher level of reality than TV usually permits. They did humorous shtick unrelated to Carl’s real dilemma (the monster of the week) and in the process emerged as people rather than ciphers.

The supporting cast performed much the same function: to ground the bizarre show in reality. Tony Vincenzo (Simon Oakland) was another absolute original. The disapproving, skeptical boss may have been a long-standing TV cliché by 1974, but the writers on *Kolchak* always afforded Oakland interesting shtick that made him seem humorous rather than merely trite. He had to practice an important speech in “The Spanish Moss Murders,” and tried to use Carl as a sounding board. He went on a diet, was taking vitamins in “The Youth Killer.” He longed for his good old college days when he played drums in a band in “Demon in Lace.” He thirsted for a vacation in “Werewolf,” etcetera. Each of these sub-sub-sub plots had very little to do with the actual telling of the individual stories but, like the comedic guest performances, managed to convince audiences that they were watching real, or at least *realistic* people. The prissy Updyke (Jack Grinnage), and the darling Miss Emily (Ruth McDevitt) also seemed cast and created for their individuality, not for their physical appearances or importance to the storyline. Thus *Kolchak* succeeded because the writers understood the cadences of dialogue and let their actors run with that cadence. Impressively, the writers and performers seemed to actually listen to how real people talk, and the result was an individual program which did not seem like “regular” television. The writing was always crisp, always sharp, and always amusing.

Of course, Darren McGavin, perhaps the most unlikely protagonist in modern terror TV, held everything together with unmatched aplomb. One critic described Carl Kolchak as the Sam Donaldson of the supernatural set, and that funny description is just about perfect. In his horrendous, ill-fitting suit (with short pants) and a lousy old hat (which Vincenzo describes as a “bird feeder”) this eccentric but determined little man defends the human race and the city of Chicago from the most evil monsters imaginable. McGavin is a marvel in this role. As Kolchak, he really seems to believe the oddball stories his character explores, and he pursues them with an obsessiveness seemingly absent from Kolchak’s dress and personal life. In fact, Kolchak seems to have no personal life. In one story, the audience learns he has never been married. In another (“The Devil’s Platform”), he is tempted by the devil with the thought of winning the Pulitzer Prize. Other than these character insights, little is known of Kolchak’s past or aspirations. Perhaps more to the point is his *modus operandi*: Kolchak is a man who will go anywhere and do anything in pursuit of a story. In “Vampire” he pretends to be a “john” to catch a vampire hooker in the act. In “The Spanish Moss Murders” he claims to be a health inspector. In “Chopper” he lies and says that he is a documentary filmmaker. In “Demon in Lace” he gains info by pretending to be a reporter for the prestigious academic magazine *Archaeology Today*. He pays bribes for insider information from the likes of “The Monk,” doormen, and Gordy the Ghoul. He is dogged, and not necessarily ethical in his pursuit of the truth. Darren McGavin has created that rare hero in TV: a man who carries a series not with good looks or fisticuffs, but with wit, persistence, intelligence, and charisma.

Still, it is not just the quirks (the cast) and the jerks (the comedic guest actors) who make *Kolchak: The Night Stalker* an extraordinary TV initiative. The series is also lined with (again like the James Bond movies) the most interesting villains around. Kolchak matches wits with a Satan-sponsored

senatorial candidate (a very young Tom Skerritt) in “The Devil’s Platform,” bests Helen of Troy (Cathy Lee Crosby) in “The Youth Killer,” and defeats the sullen Eric Braeden—a werewolf—in “The Werewolf.”

Despite these “human monsters,” *The Night Stalker* is probably best remembered for its inhuman antagonists: invisible extraterrestrials sucking up bone marrow and leaving behind toxic droppings in “They Have Been...” a moss covered swamp-thing from the Louisiana bayou in “The Spanish Moss Murders,” ambulatory mannequins in “The Trevi Collection,” a headless motorcycle rider in “Chopper,” a devilish shape-shifter called a Rakshasha in “Horror in the Heights,” and so on. Though many of these monsters are low budget in their design and execution, the production team hid the seams well and showcased them adequately at the same time. For example, the shambling beast in “The Spanish Moss Murders” was a convincing, shaggy thing most often seen as it turned around a corner. A close-up of its inhuman eyes was used for effect, eliminating the need for a revealing (and embarrassing) full-body shot. Good horror films learned a long time ago that what *isn’t* shown is often far more effective than what is shown, and *Kolchak: The Night Stalker* learned the same lesson.

The show was scary not simply because of this admirable less-is-more approach to monsters, but because Kolchak was an unconventional character, a coward even. Audiences had little reason to assume his competence in killing monsters, so things were always a little unpredictable in spite of the familiar formula. In “Zombie,” Kolchak had to crawl into the back of a station wagon in a junkyard, pour salt into the mouth of a slumbering Haitian Zombie, and then sew up the mouth of the ghoul! Well, he nervously got around to the salt and ... WHAM ... the zombie awoke! After this unexpected jolt, Carl, in very human fashion, started screaming. He then retreated and ran for his life, too scared to finish the job. That was the beauty and the terror of *Kolchak: The Night Stalker*. He was a regular, little guy facing extraordinary and scary things, and eventually besting them through the human characteristic called “brass balls.” In a time when people were cynical about their elected leaders (because of Watergate), Kolchak’s constant besting of city hall was an optimistic battle cry for individualism and the importance of a single voice. Audiences rooted for him because he was tenacious, bold, easy to identify with, but also because he evidenced believable responses to unbelievable situations. When confronted by the monsters, his first instinct, like ours, was to yell and burn rubber.

Although *The Sixth Sense* preceded *Kolchak: The Night Stalker* by two seasons, this Darren McGavin series is really the first out-and-out horror TV show to focus on the supernatural every week with the same lead character. As such, it is the granddaddy of everything from *Friday the 13th: The Series* (1987–1991) to Chris Carter’s excellent *The X-Files*. A trend setter and a series filled with genuine wit and chills, *Kolchak* is one of the top five series in the modern terror TV pantheon. A remake or feature film would be problematic, however. Who could ably replace the great Darren McGavin or the wonderful Simon Oakland (who passed away fifteen years ago)? Although this author’s suggestion for a new Kolchak, James Woods, might make a decent Carl Kolchak, even he is not a perfect fit in a universe where personality and individuality sells the scares better than the blood and guts.

## CAST AND CREDITS

*Cast:* Darren McGavin (Carl Kolchak); Simon Oakland (Tony Vincenzo); Jack Grinnage (Ron Updyke); Ruth McDevitt (Emily Cowles).

*Credits:* Created by: Jeff Rice. Produced by: Paul Playdon, Cy Chermak. Story Consultant: David

Chase. *Music Score*: Jerry Fielding, Greig McRitchie. *Theme*: Gil Melle. *Director of Photography*: Ronald W. Browne, Donald Peterman, Eduardo Ricci. *Art Director*: Raymond Beal. *Set Decorations*: Robert Freer. *Assistant Directors*: John Guidaso, David Hawks, Bill Holbrook. *Unit Manager*: Ralph Sariego. *Film Editors*: Anthony Redman, Robert M. Leeds. *Sound*: John Kean. *Editorial Supervision*: Richard Belding. *Music Supervision*: Hal Mooney. *Costumes*: Bill Jobe. *Main Title Design*: Jack Cole. In Technicolor. *Title and Optical Effects*: Universal Title. Produced in Association with Francy Productions, Inc.

## EPISODE GUIDE

### • *Telefilm*

**“The Night Stalker”** Written by Richard Matheson; From a novel by Jeff Rice; Directed by John Llewelyn Moxey; airdate: January 11, 1972; *Guest Cast*: Barry Atwater (Janos Skorzeny); Carol Lynley (Gail Foster); Claude Akins (Sheriff Butcher); Kent Smith (D.A. Paine); Ralph Meeker (Bernie Jenks); Stanley Adams (Fred); Elisha Cook Jr. (Mickey); Larry Linville (Mokuri); Jordan Rhodes (Dr. O’Brien).

Down-on-his-luck reporter Carl Kolchak investigates a rash of murders in seedy Las Vegas, only to come to the conclusion that a vampire is the responsible party. Disbelieved by the authorities, Carl tracks the vampire killings back to an old house, and a strange man named Janos Skorzeny. Taking the law into his own hands, Carl enters the house, with cross and wooden stake at the ready, but the vampire has superhuman strength and a thirst for blood.

**“The Night Strangler”** Written by Richard Matheson; Directed by Dan Curtis; airdate: January 16, 1973; *Guest Cast*: Richard Anderson (Dr. Malcolm); Jo Ann Pflug (Louise); John Carradine (Llewelyn Crossbinder); Margaret Hamilton (Professor Crabwell); Scott Brady (Captain Roscoe Schubert); Wally Cox (Berry); Ivor Francis (Dr. Webb); Kate Murtaugh (Janie).

An out-of-work Kolchak lands in Seattle to plead to ex-boss Vincenzo for a job. Vincenzo, still smarting over the Las Vegas debacle, gives Carl one more chance. Before long, however, Kolchak is involved in another bizarre case, this one dealing with a rash of strangled women and a secret underground city. Kolchak follows the clues to their logical conclusion, and comes face-to-face with a mad scientist who has been murdering women and draining their bodies of blood so as to remain forever young.

### • *Series Episodes*

**1. “The Ripper”** Written by Rudolph Borchert; Directed by Allen Baron; airdate: September 13, 1974; *Guest Cast*: Beatrice Colen (Jane Plumb); Ken Lynch (Captain R.M. Warren); Ruth McDevitt (Elderly Woman); Marya Small (Masseuse); David Mantooth (Policeman); Robert Bryan Berger (Mail Boy); Roberta Collins (Detective Cortazzo); Clint Young (Driver); Mickey Gilbert (The Ripper).

Miss Emily goes on vacation, and Tony Vincenzo assigns Kolchak to fill in for her as punishment for a recent investigation wherein he pretended to be a police commissioner. Kolchak all but ignores his new task and instead focuses on a series of gruesome “Jack the Ripper”-style murders plaguing the city. Kolchak’s colleague, Jane Plumb, believes the murderer suffers from contagious psychosis, but Kolchak suspects Chicago’s finest are actually facing a 130-year-old killer ... the original Jack the Ripper. The killer, a shadowy figure in black cape, strikes again at Sultan’s Palace, a masseuse parlor



at the Loop (Chicago's answer to Times Square), and Kolchak determines the only thing that can kill the Ripper is electricity.

**2. "Zombie"** Written by Zekial Marko and David Chase; From a story by Zekial Marko; Directed by Alex Grasshoff; airdate: September 20, 1974; *Guest Cast:* Charles Aidman (Captain Leo Winwood); Joseph Sirola (Sposato); J. Pat O'Malley (Caretaker); John Fiedler (Gordon Spangler); Antonio Fargas (Sweetstick Weldon); Scatman Crothers (Uncle Filemon); Pauline Myers (Mamalois Edmonds); Earl Faison (The Zombie); Carol Ann Susi (Monique Marmelstein); Ben Frommer (The Monk); Roland Bob Harris (Poppy).

While investigating the murder of several syndicate mob men, Kolchak discovers that their corpses have had their spines snapped by another corpse—one with chicken blood behind his ears. Francois Edmunds, a Haitian, was shot and murdered by the mob and now the black former numbers operator is back from the grave for vengeance. He leaves his earthen bed each night, a zombie avenger, and his mob targets are chosen by a voodoo priestess. Kolchak plots to stop the zombie massacre with a sewing needle, thread, white candles, and salt.

**3. "U.F.O" (aka "They Have Been, They Are, They Will Be")** Written by Rudolph Borchert; From a story by Dennis Clark; Directed by Allen Baron; airdate: September 27, 1974; *Guest Cast:* James Gregory (Captain Quill); Mary Wickes (Dr. Bess Weinstock); Dick Van Patten (Alfred Brindle); Maureen Arthur (U.F.O. aficionado); Carol Ann Susi (Monique Marmelstein); John Fiedler (Gordy Spangler); Rudy Challenger (Stanley Wedemyer); Phil Leeds (Howard Gough); Len Lesser (Crowley); Fritz Feld (Waiter); Tony Rizzo (Leon Van Housen); Dennis McCarthy (Guard).

On the eve of the World Series, Kolchak investigates the deaths of several animals in the Lincoln Park Zoo as well as the theft of two tons of lead ingots from a local warehouse owned by Raydyne Electronics. The story takes Kolchak to Mariposa Way, a suburban address where a strange, foul-smelling substance has appeared on Mr. Brindle's front lawn. All of these incidents, as well as some stolen electronic equipment and murdered house cats, relate to an extraterrestrial incursion on Earth. Invisible aliens are draining the bone marrow from humans and animals, leaving behind only that strange black muck, which Kolchak concludes is alien digestive juice.

**4. "The Vampire"** Written by David Chase; Story by Bill Stratton; Directed by Don Weiss; airdate: October 4, 1974; *Guest Cast:* William Daniels (Lt. Jack Mateo); Suzanne Charny (Catherine Rawlins); John Doucette (Deputy Sample); Jan Murray (Ichabod Grace); Larry Storch (James "Swede" Brightowsky); Kathleen Nolan (Faye Krueger); Milt Kamen (Gingrich); Anne Whitfield (Girl); Army Archerd (Man); Selma Archerd (Woman); Noel DeSouza (Chandra); Bill Baldwin (First Reporter); Alyscia Maxwell (Third Reporter).

Outside Las Vegas, a killer strikes in darkness, and before long, the police have recovered three bodies completely drained of blood. Assigned to cover the wedding of a Far Eastern "transcendental" guru, Kolchak pursues the murder story and becomes convinced that a female vampire is involved. While a real estate agent and wannabe journalist covers for Kolchak on the guru story with Vincenzo, Kolchak tracks down Catherine Rawlins, a prostitute turned vampire who has made her home at a baronial estate in the Hollywood hills.

**5. "The Werewolf"** Written by David Chase and Paul Playdon; Directed by Don Weiss; airdate: November 1, 1974; *Guest Cast:* Dick Gautier (Mel Charter); Henry Jones (Captain Wells); Nita Talbot

(Paula Griffin); Eric Braeden (Bernhardt Stieglitz); Jackie Russell (Wendy); Lewis Charles (George Levitt); Bob Hastings (Hallem); Barry Cahill (Dr. Alan Ross); Dort Clark (Gribbs); Heath Jobes (Radioman); Jim Hawkins (Jay Remy).

During the Christmas holidays, Vincenzo reluctantly sends Kolchak to cover the final transatlantic voyage of the *Hanover*, a 900-foot-long cruise ship from the 1930s that survived everything from the depression to U-boats and world wars. Once the *Hanover* sets sail, a full moon looms overhead, and many passengers and crew members are killed by a creature which Kolchak believes is a werewolf. While Kolchak melts down the buttons on the captain's dress uniform to serve as silver bullets, he also learns about NATO officer Bernhardt Stieglitz: a strange passenger who was at the sight of a vicious wolf attack in Montana.

**6. "Firefall" (aka "The Doppelganger")** Written by Bill S. Ballinger; Directed by Don Weiss; airdate: November 8, 1974; *Guest Cast*: Fred Beir (Ryder Bond); Philip Carey (Sgt. Mayer); Madlyn Rhue (Marie); Viginia Vincent; David Doyle; Joshua Shelley.

An exact duplicate, or doppelganger, of arrogant symphony pianist Ryder Bond, is somehow responsible for a series of grisly deaths by fire. Kolchak looks into the matter with his typical aplomb, and all points lead to the conclusion that a dead arsonist named Markoff has somehow conjured this avenging spectral force from beyond the grave. Kolchak consults a gypsy who may understand the mechanisms of this supernatural haunting.

**7. "The Devil's Platform"** Written by Don Mullally; From a story by Tim Maschler; Directed by Allen Baron; airdate: November 15, 1974; *Guest Cast*: Tom Skerritt (Robert D. Palmer); Julie Gregg (Susan Marie Driscoll); Ellen Weston (Lorraine Palmer); John Myhers (James Talbot); Jeanne Cooper (Dr. Kline); Bill Mims (Officer Hale); Robert Do Qui (Park Policeman); Dick Patterson (Stephen Wald); Stanley Adams (Bartender); Bill Welsh (T.V. Announcer).

Senatorial candidate Robert Palmer runs a strange campaign: his opponent's speechwriter dies in a boat accident, an opponent is killed in a car crash, and his own campaign manager, who threatened to go public with Palmer's scandals, dies in a fatal elevator drop. Kolchak follows the body count and the polls with interest, even as an evil canine tracks him down. Carl soon begins to suspect that the evil dog, who wears an amulet, and the candidate are one and the same, and that Robert Palmer has made a pact with the Prince of Darkness. Palmer confronts Kolchak and attempts to tempt the reporter into his own deal with the devil.

**8. "Bad Medicine"** Written by L. Ford Neale; Directed by Alex Grasshoff; airdate: November 29, 1974; *Guest Cast*: Richard Kiel (The Diablo); Ramon Bieri (Captain Joe Baker); Victory Jory (Indian Chief); Alice Ghostley (Agnes Temple); Marvin Kaplan (Delgado); James Griffith (Schwartz).

Kolchak clashes with the Diablo, a towering Native American monster preying on the wealthy elite of Chicago. Kolchak must delve into Indian lore to discover the means to stop this devilish creature, who has been stealing not only the lives, but the wealth of his victims as well. Diablo is no ordinary opponent, however, he is incredibly strong, able to hypnotize his prey (which is why all the deaths look like suicides), and even capable of changing shape.

**9. "The Spanish Moss Murders"** Written by Al Friedman and David Chase; Directed by Gordon Hessler; airdate: December 6, 1974; *Guest Cast*: Keenan Wynn (Captain "Mad Dog" Siska); Severn

Darden (Dr. Pollack); Randy Boone (Fiddler); Johnny Silver (Pepe); Ned Glass (Superintendent); Richard Kiel (The Monster); Virginia Gregg (Dr. Hollenbeck); Brian Avery (Record Producer); Maurice Marsac (Henri Villon); Elisabeth Brooks (Lab Assistant); Donald Mantooth (Sleep Subject).

As July 4th approaches in Chicago, a rash of murders plague the city. Each of the victims, including a lab assistant at a sleep research center and a chef at Chez Voltaire, is found with a crushed chest cavity and a green leafy substance, Spanish moss, nearby. Kolchak investigates and determines that the terror may originate from a Louisiana legend: a Cajun myth about a beast of the bayou. When the Spanish moss monster turns his murderous rage on Kolchak in a subterranean sewer tunnel, the feisty reporter's only salvation rests with a spear created out of authentic bayou gumwood.

**10. "The Energy Eater" (aka "Matchemondo")** Written by Arthur Rowe and Rudolph Borchert; Directed by Alex Grasshoff; airdate: December 13, 1974; *Guest Cast:* William Smith (Jim Elkhorn); Michael Strogin (Walter Green); Robert Yuro (Captain Webster); John Alvin (Dr. Carrie); Joyce Jillson (Diana); Elaine Giftos (Janice); Michael Fox (Frank Wesley).

The Matchemondo, an ancient Indian spirit of death, lays siege to a new Chicago hospital by a lake, which has been built over its burial ground. Kolchak endeavors to learn more, but time is running out because the malevolent creature is literally draining the life from helpless hospital patients and feeding on the energy of hospital devices such as x-ray machines. Before long, it will become unstoppable.

**11. "Horror in the Heights" (aka "The Rakshasa")** Written by Jimmy Sangster; Directed by Michael T. Caffey; airdate: December 20, 1974; *Guest Cast:* Phil Silvers (Harry Starman); Abraham Sofaer (Indian); Ned Glass (Jo); Jim Goodwin (Frank Rivas); Eric Server (Officer Boxman); John Bleifer (Charlie); Herb Vigran (Mr. Goldstein); Naomi Stevens (Mrs. Goldstein); Robert Karnes (Officer Thomas).

In Roosevelt Heights, the predominantly senior citizen population is being murdered by what the authorities consider to be packs of vicious rats. Kolchak believes the source of evil is quite different, and he learns from a Far Eastern monster hunter that a beast called the Rakshasa is on the loose. This ancient monster is just one in a race of horrible creatures that exists outside our dimension and awaits the right moment to return. The Rakshasa hunts its prey by appearing to be someone that its victim trusts. When Kolchak comes face-to-face with Miss Emily in a dark alley, he must determine if he is facing a beloved friend, or if he should use a crossbow and murder the approaching figure....

**12. "Mr. R.I.N.G."** Written by L. Ford Neale; Directed by Gene Levitt; airdate: January 10, 1975; *Guest Cast:* Craig Baxley (Mr. R.I.N.G.); Julie Adams (Mrs. Walker); Bert Freed (Captain Atkins); Harry Bakman (Senator Stevens); Robert Easton (Carmichael); Donald Barry (Guard); Corinne Michaels (Leslie).

An android kills his creator and flees the lab, setting off a desperate search by the federal government to reclaim control of this advanced and deadly machine. Soon, Carl is hot on the trail of Mr. R.I.N.G., a robot capable of human emotions, and fearful of being deactivated. Kolchak must stop the machine before it kills every person who has learned of its existence, and is therefore considered a threat.

**13. "Primal Scream"** Written by Bill S. Ballinger and David Chase; Directed by Robert Scherer; airdate: January 17, 1975; *Guest Cast:* Pat Harrington Jr. (Kitzmilller); John Marley (Captain Molnar);

Lindsay Workman (Dr. Fisk); Katharine Woodville (Dr. Lynch); Jamie Farr (Jack Burton); Byron Morrow (Dr. Cowan); Al Checco (Nils); Sandra Gould, Regis J. Cordin, Vince Howard, Jeanie Bell, Barbara Rhodes.

A protean lifeform buried in the snows of the North Pole hundreds of centuries ago is revived in Chicago by a scientist hoping to unlock the secrets of prehistory. When a series of nocturnal killings begin, Kolchak is on the story, and in pursuit of a prehistoric gorilla monster with unparalleled hunting instincts.

**14. “The Trevi Collection”** Written by Rudolph Borchert; Directed by Don Weis; airdate: January 24, 1975; *Guest Cast:* Nina Foch (Madame Trevi); Marvin Miller (Lecturer); Bernard Kopell (Dr. Gravinitus); Lara Parker (Madelaine); Richard Bakalyn (The First Killer); Doug Fowley (The Super); Priscilla Morrill (Griselda); Harry Brandon (The Man); Henry Slate (Second Killer); Peter Leads (Photographer); Beverly Gill (Melody); Dennis McCarthy (The Figure); Diane Quick (Ariel).

In Chicago’s chic, high-fashion district, Kolchak investigates a series of strange deaths centered around Madame Trevi and her new line of 1975 clothes. The bizarre deaths (a scalding shower; a fall from a window) seem to suggest the activity of a witch’s coven. When Kolchak becomes cursed by the spell of a powerful (but unknown) black witch, he does some fast research on witches, and learns that the only way to destroy one is to accuse it of witchcraft in public. To do so, however, he must find the guilty party.

**15. “Chopper”** Written by Steve Fisher and David Chase; Story by Robert Zemeckis and Bob Gale; Directed by Bruce Kessler; airdate: January 31, 1975; *Guest Cast:* Larry Linville (Captain Jonas); Arthur Metrano (Studs Spake); Sharon Farrell (Lila Morton); Frank Aletter (Norman Cahill); Jay Robinson (Dr. Strig); Jesse White (Watchman); Jim Backus (Herb); Steve Franken (Neil); Joey Aresco (Electric Larry); Jimmy Murphy (Beaner); Jack Bernardi (Otto); Jim Malinda (Snow White); Brunetta Barnett (Nurse).

In 1956, Howard “the Swordsman” Baker was accidentally decapitated by members of a rival motorcycle “bike” gang. Now, twenty years later, a headless rider with a sharp sword is ruthlessly murdering the aged men and women of that gang, decapitating them as well. Kolchak investigates, and discovers an odd footnote from the French Revolution: at the height of the Reign of Terror, headless corpses separated from their heads in mass grave burials were often seen wandering the streets of Paris in search of their missing craniums. Could the same thing be happening here, but with Baker returning from the grave in search of his own long-lost skull?

**16. “Demon in Lace”** Written by Stephen Lord, Michael Kozoll, and David Chase; From a story by Stephen Lord; Directed by Don Weis; airdate: February 7, 1975; *Guest Cast:* Keenan Wynn (Captain Siska); Jackie Vernon (Coach Toomey); Kristina Holland (Rosalind Winters); Carolyn Jones (Registrar); Andrew Prine (C. Evan Spate); Carmen Zapata (Spanish Woman); Maria Grimm (Maria Vanegas); Ben Masters (Mike Thompson); Milton Parsons (Mozart); John Elride (Mark Hanson); Davis Roberts (Coroner); Donald Mantooth (Brennan); Hunter Von Leer (Don Rhiner); Margaret Impert (Deputy); Iris Edwards (Girl).

At Illinois State Tech, a supernatural force is causing young men to die of fear, and Kolchak traces the killings back to a Sumerian tablet recently brought back from Iraq. The writing on the tablet refers to a time in prehistory when a female demon called a succubus had dominion over the Mesopotamian

empire. The succubus appears to young men as a beautiful woman, but then turns into an old hag and frightens them to death. As more all-Americans bite the dust, Kolchak learns that the only way to kill the succubus is to destroy the ancient ... and priceless ... cuneiform tablet.

**17. “Legacy of Terror”** Written by Arthur Row; Directed by Don McDougall; airdate: February 14, 1975; *Guest Cast:*Erik Estrada (Pepe); Ramon Bieri (Captain Webster); Pippa Scott (Tillie); Carlos Romero (Andrews); Sorrell Brooke (Eddie); Sondra Currie (Vicky); Victor Campos (Professor Rodriguez).

A series of human sacrifices, in which the hearts of the victims have been removed, lead Kolchak to suspect that an Aztec cult is operating in secret in the city. His suspicions prove correct, and Kolchak discovers that the sacrifices are part of a plot to resurrect an ancient god of evil and reanimate a mummylike creature.

**18. “The Knightly Murders”** Written by Michael Kozoll and David Chase; Directed by Vincent McEveety; airdate: March 7, 1975; *Guest Cast:* John Dehner (Captain Rausch); Hans Conreid (Boggs); Shug Fisher (Pop); Lucille Benson; Don Carter; Bryan O’Byrne.

People in Chicago are being murdered by a medieval knight in armor. Kolchak investigates and discovers that the spirit of a Frenchman who dabbled in the occult may be responsible for the killings. It seems the ghost objects to a new plan to turn the museum where his armor resides into something less regal.

**19. “The Youth Killer”** Written by Rudolph Borchert; Directed by Don McDougall; airdate: March 14, 1975; *Guest Cast:*Cathy Lee Crosby (Helen Sertes); Dwayne Hickman (Sgt. Orkin); Kathleen Freeman (Della Sarkov); Demosthenes (Cabbie); John Fiedler (Gordy); Eddie Firestone (Conventioneer); Michael Richardson (Melvin); Penny Santon (Mother); James Murtaugh (Manager); James Ingersoll (First Young Man); Reb Brown (Second Young Man); Joss White (Secretary).

Kolchak is curious when a number of elderly, unidentified corpses show up all over Chicago. His search to find an answer leads him to MaxMatch, a computer dating service run by a beautiful blond, Helen Sertes, who is obsessed with youth and beauty. Helen is actually a seemingly immortal demigoddess, Helen of Troy, who has made a deal with the Olympian Goddess Hecate for eternal youth. In return for the ritual sacrifice of young, physically perfect people, Hecate provides vitality and beauty for Helen. Kolchak learns the only way to prevent Helen from draining other swinging singles of their youth is to destroy her holy temple.

**20. “The Sentry”** Written by L. Ford Neale, John Huff; Directed by Seymour Robbie; airdate: March 21, 1975; *Guest Cast:* Kathie Browne (Lamont); Albert Paulsen (Verhaden); Tom Bosley (Jack Flaherty); John Hoyt (Lamar Beckwith); Frank Campanella (Chapman); Margaret Avery (Ruth); Cliff Norton (Arnie); Frank Marth (Brody).

A reptilian relative of the dinosaurs, hatched in secret near a newly built underground laboratory, wreaks havoc. Carl delves into the story and finds that the beast may be committing murder for a very special reason ... it may be protecting something of great value.

## Quinn Martin's *Tales of the Unexpected* (1977–1978)

### CRITICAL RECEPTION

“... drivel from the TV assembly line.”—John Stanley, *Creature Features Movie Guide Strikes Again*, 1994, page 382.

“*Tales of the Unexpected*, produced by Quinn Martin ... was ... interesting, concentrating on psychological horrors (in one episode, reminiscent of Anne Rivers Siddons's *The House Next Door*, a murderer sees his victims rise from the dead on his television set), but low ratings killed the program after a short run.”—Stephen King, *Danse Macabre*, page 249.

### FORMAT

Life is seldom as simple as it might seem, and is often full of surprises or unexpected twists. The premise of this short-lived network anthology series is that there are twists and turns in our lives, usually horrific, that we just cannot anticipate.

Each episode of *Quinn Martin's Tales of the Unexpected* commences with a fast-paced, jazzy theme song. On screen, a black-and-white eyeball is seen in close-up. Inside this spinning eyeball, sepia tone images from various episodes are displayed. These images include a car, a clock on a wall, a phone booth, a bus, a farmhouse, a ghost, a snake, a graveyard, even a house in “negative” image. These rotating opening credits are reminiscent of *Circle of Fear* (1973) and are meant to suggest that the unexpected can be found anywhere, even in the most common places. At the close of this fast-paced opening sequence, the legend “tonight's episode” is followed by the episode title.

After the credits have finished, narrator William Conrad (in voice-over only) pontificates about a general subject (like “evil” or “vanity”) and then applies it to a specific character within the night's drama. At the end of the hour, William Conrad's voice returns to explain the “sting,” the O. Henry twist, and again relate it to the general rather than the specific. For instance, in the two-parter “The Force of Evil,” guest star Lloyd Bridges receives a box which may either have flowers or a severed hand inside. The picture pulls back further and further at a high angle (via crane) and Conrad then solemnly intones:

If you believe in the goodness of man, then the box contains roses. But, if you believe in a force of evil ... it could contain almost anything!

At commercial breaks during *Quinn Martin's Tales of the Unexpected*, the camera goes out-of-focus into a blur. On return from the commercial breaks, the picture circles outward from a frozen image of a sepia-tone eyeball.

### HISTORY

Executive producer Quinn Martin first became known for his work in television as a staff producer on the popular gangster series *The Untouchables* (1959-63) starring Robert Stack. That memorable series

served as Martin's springboard to success, and Martin was eventually responsible for such TV classics as *The Fugitive* (1963-67) starring David Janssen and Barry Morse, *The Invaders* (1967-68) starring Roy Thinnes, *Barnaby Jones* (1973-80) starring Buddy Ebsen, and *The Streets of San Francisco* (1972-77) with Karl Malden and Michael Douglas. Despite these successes, Quinn Martin also served as executive producer on a number of less-memorable, less-successful TV series. Among these are *The Manhunter* (1974-75) starring Ken Howard, *Bert D'Angelo/Superstar* (1976) starring Paul Sorvino, and *Most Wanted* (1976-77) starring Robert Stack. Each of these series, seldom remembered today, barely managed to survive half a season. Along with these failed series, Quinn Martin briefly returned to the genre of *The Invaders* and produced the "horror" anthology series *Tales of the Unexpected* (1977).

William Conrad, the narrator on Martin's *The Fugitive*, was the only regular presence on this hour-long, color anthology which made its debut on February 2, 1977. Conrad had served as narrator on series such as the cartoon *Bullwinkle* (1961-62), the syndicated *The Wild, Wild World of Animals* (1973-78) and the radio version of *Gunsmoke* before bringing his expertise to this horror series. The show itself was a variation on *The Twilight Zone*, but was an hour long instead of 30 minutes. Each story introduced a character and a horrific situation, and then ended with that character facing a unique twist. In fact, a better title for the series might have been its British one: *Twist in the Tale*. For in *Tales of the Unexpected* (not to be confused with *Roald Dahl's Tales of the Unexpected* [1979-88]) the twist always came at the climax of the tale and left viewers "hanging" in suspense.

In its brief time on the air, *Quinn Martin's Tales of the Unexpected* featured a pseudo-supernatural remake of the classic film *Cape Fear*, a remake of *The Invaders* pilot "Beach-head" (first aired on January 10, 1967), and other rather predictable variations of horror stories already handled better on series such as *Rod Serling's Night Gallery*. The presence of performers like Carl Weathers (*Predator* [1987]), Ronny Cox (*Robocop* [1987], *Total Recall* [1990]), Dean Stockwell (*Dune* [1984]), Gary Collins (*The Sixth Sense* [1972]), and the combined talents of William Conrad and Quinn Martin were not enough to save a rather lackluster series, which ran on Wednesday evenings from 10:00 to 11:00 P.M. against the popular ABC combo of *Charlie's Angels* and *Baretta*. Although the show was moved to Sunday nights for a one week trial period, it fared no better. As a result of exceptionally low ratings, *Quinn Martin's Tales of the Unexpected* was canceled after only eight stories.

Despite the failure of *Quinn Martin's Tales of the Unexpected*, William Conrad quickly bounced back, serving as the narrator on the first year of *Buck Rogers in the 25th Century* (1979-81) and starring in his follow-up to *Cannon* (1971-76) entitled *Nero Wolfe* (1981). As for *Tales of the Unexpected*, its only two-hour story, "Force of Evil," was released on videotape by Worldvision Home Video in 1987, and can still occasionally be found at libraries or video outlets. Rarely rerun in America because of its short run, *Quinn Martin's Tales of the Unexpected* has been aired several times in Great Britain under its title there, the aforementioned *Twist in the Tale*.

### CRITICAL COMMENTARY

*Quinn Martin's Tales of the Unexpected* has two major problems which it never managed to overcome. In fairness, the first problem was not really the fault of the series' creators, but the second surely was. The first stumbling block for the show is the time period in which it was produced, and the restrictive rules guiding how much violence could be shown on prime-time television at that juncture. This limitation resulted in many *Tales* episodes which felt timid rather than inventive and frightening. Intensity was equated with violence by the standards and practices department of all three networks in

those days, and so everything, even horrific stories, had to be kept on a kind of even, dull plateau, that Stephen King referred to once as a “semidoze.” This was troubling because the *Tales* stories were already slow-paced at an hour, and the lack of intensity and energy merely doubled the series’ boredom quotient (which was already considerable.)

The second problem with *Tales of the Unexpected* involves ingenuity and creativity. It is perhaps the singularly most uninventive horror series in the history of the genre. Instead of forging ahead with new ideas, Quinn Martin’s anthology was satisfied to rehash tried-and-true horror tropes with little style or originality. Even humor was missing. *Tales of the Unexpected* is thus totally straight-faced in its recounting of tales that were old when they were being done on radio thirty years earlier. This “serious” approach only makes the show seem funny at times because it is totally unaware of its own lack of history and knowledge about the genre it is a part of.

Consider the two-part epic “Force of Evil” for instance. It is a blatant steal from the classic motion picture *Cape Fear* (1962) (which was remade by Martin Scorsese in 1991). In this episode of *Tales of the Unexpected*, an angry convict (Teddy Jakes instead of Max Cady) returns to society with a grudge, seeking revenge against a respected man of the community (a prominent physician who turned him in rather than a lawyer who failed to defend him adequately). When this criminal (in the Robert Mitchum role) begins to harass Lloyd Bridges (in the Gregory Peck role) and his family by killing the family pet (a horse instead of a dog), the physician seeks the help of the law. Of course, he finds that no law can protect him, and Bridges takes matters into his own hands. He finds, however, that Jakes is relentless and seemingly unkillable. After Jakes befriends the physician’s innocent daughter (Eve Plumb), the final battle takes place aboard a houseboat, and Jakes is drowned. As anyone who is even remotely familiar with either version of *Cape Fear* can attest to, this story is a blow-by-blow remake, with the only original facet being the notion that Jakes may actually be “walking dead,” a kind of unkillable specter. Still, to remake *Cape Fear* under the restrictive auspices of mid-70s network television is a fool’s errand. Because no violence can really be dramatized, “Force of Evil” lacks any excitement whatsoever. It is basically two hours of Lloyd Bridges and his nemesis trading threatening innuendoes and purposeless, endless fisticuffs. Worse, the performances are uniformly atrocious, with Eve Plumb perfectly re-creating her role as Jan Brady on *The Brady Bunch* in a delightful (but presumably unintended) parody.

Other stories on Quinn Martin’s *Tales of the Unexpected* also lack the inventive twist that the show so relentlessly advertised. “A Hand for Sonny Blue” illustrates this problem. This episode, directed by Curtis Harrington (*The Cat Creature* [1973], *The Dead Don’t Die* [1974], *Killer Bees* [1974]), is a regurgitation of the old horror chestnut about a man in an accident who receives a hand transplant from, of course, a criminal. This story had been seen before on *Night Gallery* as “The Hand of Borgus Weems,” not to mention in the various motion picture versions of *The Hands of Orlac* in 1935 and 1962. Still, at a half-hour length, “A Hand for Sonny Blue” could have been effective, if unoriginal. At an hour, it was padded to excruciating length. Not only was there the so-called plot about Dodgers pitcher Sonny Blue and his misbehaving new hand, but viewers were treated to an extended police chase through a warehouse, a sequence which seemed more appropriate to *Starsky and Hutch* than *Night Gallery*. And, dreadfully, the episode also featured several musical numbers (including lackluster renditions of “Take Me Out to the Ball Game” and “Someone to Watch Over Me”). More disappointing than either of these problems, the story was wholly anti-rational, like the 1950s horror movies which warned against the use of atomic power. In “A Hand for Sonny Blue” the teleplay warned audiences not once but twice that the evil hand transplant came not from the hand of God, but



from modern science ... as if transplant surgery should be feared as something “against God’s plan.” In 1977, this kind of backwards thinking was silly and unforgivable.

The final insult, however, was the climactic twist of “A Hand for Sonny Blue.” The whole thing, evil hand and all, was revealed to be a dream: the most irritating of all clichés in genre television! “There is no present, no future ... only the past ... and it happens again and again...,” narrator Conrad stated enigmatically, making mincemeat out of the story. After that closing bit of inscrutable wisdom, it was anybody’s guess what the show was actually supposed to signify. Was Sonny Blue caught in a time-loop in which he received the evil hand? Had he dreamed of the evil hand experience, only to wake up and realize it was no dream, but precognition? Or, had he actually been given the evil hand, only to wake up with a second hand transplant? Or, better yet, was his vision of an evil hand actually a warning from God, demanding that he repent the evils of “transplant surgery?”

As bad and hackneyed as “A Hand for Sonny Blue” is, reality and science finally caught up with this old chestnut in 1999. The Associated Press reported in early January of 1999 that a New Jersey man named Matthew Scott received the first successful transplanted hand courtesy of Dr. Warren Breidenbach. One can only hope that Dr. Breidenbach was very careful about selecting from where and whom he got that transplanted hand. In this case, horror successfully forecasted a scientific technique, but hopefully exaggerated the consequences of it!

With predictable plots, a slow pace, inferior (and unacknowledged) remakes, and ridiculous twists, *Quinn Martin’s Tales of the Unexpected* is a contender for the title of worst horror series of all time. Though network restrictions on violence and intensity may have played a part in its failure and whitebread veneer, the series really collapsed because its tales were thoroughly *expected*. Each twist was telegraphed far in advance of the episode’s conclusion, making every hour an exercise in tedium rather than horror or suspense.

## CAST AND CREDITS

*Cast:* William Conrad (Host).

*Credits:* *Executive Producer:* Quinn Martin. *Producers:* John Wilder, William Robert Yates. *Directors of Photography:* Michel Hugo, Paul Lohmann. *In Charge of Talent:* John Conwell. *Executive Editorial Supervisor:* Richard Brockway. *Executive Story Consultant:* Jerry Ziegman. *Theme Music:* David Shire. *Music:* David Shire, Richard Markowitz. *Music Supervisor:* John Elizalde. *Executive Production Manager:* Edward Teets. *Production Manager:* Gary Credle. *Editors:* Ray Daniel, Jerry Young. *Art Directors:* Joe Schiller, Herman Zimmerman. *Assistant Directors:* Nate Haggard, Bob Enrietto. *Music Editor:* Ken Wilhoit. *Sound Editor:* William Stevenson. *Postproduction Supervisor:* Don Hall. *Set Decorator:* Don Greenwood. *In Charge of Production:* Mary Katz. A QM Production, 1977.

## EPISODE GUIDE

**1. “The Final Chapter”** Written by John Wilder; Directed by Richard Lang; airdate: February 2, 1977; *Guest Cast:* Roy Thinnes (Frank Harris); Ramon Bieri (Warden Greer); Brendon Dillon (Chaplain).

A stubborn newspaper man, Frank Harris, makes a fatal miscalculation when he goes undercover to

write an exposé about capital punishment and death row. Masquerading as a convict himself, he is unable to convince his captors that he is just a reporter, not a criminal. Consequently, Harris is scheduled to be executed.

**2. “The Mask of Adonis”** Written by Ken Trevey; Directed by Richard Lang; airdate: February 9, 1977; *Guest Cast:* Robert Foxworth (Alexander Colyn); Marlyn Martin (Viviana); Linda Kelsey (Gerry); Victor Jory.

Obsessed with youth and good looks, an aging film producer finds that vanity has a price when he negotiates for a special rejuvenation formula from a less-than-trustworthy doctor.

**3. “Devil Pack”** Written by John Arnold and Arnold Somkin; Directed by Harry Falk; airdate: February 16, 1977; *Guest Cast:* Ronny Cox (Jerry Colby); Christine Belford (Ann Cox); Van Johnson (Sheriff).

An idyllic rural community is unexpectedly and relentlessly harassed by a pack of wild dogs. Worse, these hellhounds have a most unhappy influence on the domesticated animals of the town, causing them to turn on their human masters.

**4. “The Nomads”** Written by Earl Wallace; Directed by Allen Reisner; airdate: February 23, 1977; *Guest Cast:* David Birney, Eugene Roche, David Huddleston, Katherine Justice, Lynne Marta, Reed Morgan.

The aliens are coming! The aliens are coming! The only problem is that nobody will believe the Vietnam vet who witnessed the alien race establish their beachhead in the dead of night.

**5. “A Hand for Sonny Blue”** Written by John Wilder; Based on the short story “The Hand That Wouldn’t Behave” by Emile C. Schurmacher; Directed by Curtis Harrington; airdate: March 9, 1977; *Guest Cast:* Rick Nelson (Sonny Blue); Janice Lynde (Brenda Jackson); Carl Weathers (Hank Dalby); Alfred Ryder (Dr. Stender); Stewart Moss (Dr. Radburn); Paul Cavonis (Art Winters); Darrell Fetty (Ronald Baker); Henry Brown (Eugene); Aldine King (Helen Dalby); Tom Kelly (Reporter); Eric Kilpatrick (Jimmy Lee); Natividad Vacio (Liquor Store Owner).

Shortly after sealing a million-dollar contract, Dodgers pitcher Sonny Blue is badly injured in an auto accident. His right hand is crushed, but the doctors believe there is still a chance of recovery. The body of a dead murderer who robbed a liquor store has arrived at the same hospital as Blue, and the brilliant Dr. Stenger believes it is possible to conduct a hand transplant operation. Soon after the surgery, however, Sonny’s new right hand begins to have impulse-control difficulties.

**6. “The Force of Evil” (two-hour episode)** Written by Robert Malcolm Young; Directed by Richard Lang; airdate: May 13, 1977; *Guest Cast:* Lloyd Bridges (Dr. Carrington); Pat Crowley (Mrs. Carrington); Eve Plumb (Cindy Carrington); John Anderson (Sheriff Floyd Carrington); William Kirby Cullen (Ted Jakes); William Watson (John Carrington); Jerry Ayres (Deputy Jones); Cynthia Eilbacher (Bonnie); Steve Itkin (George Lerman); Stephen Coit (Dr. Foley).

The successful Dr. Carrington is none too happy when convict Teddy Jakes is released after seven years in prison. Jakes, the former crematorium operator at Carrington’s hospital, went to jail on rape and murder charges, and now he is back for revenge because Carrington did not provide him an alibi.

Carrington enlists the help of his brother, the town sheriff, but Carrington and his wife take matters into their own hands when Carrington goes after their daughter, Cindy, at the lake. Unfortunately, Ted Jakes is a hard man to kill, and he tracks the family down to a houseboat.

**7. “You’re Not Alone”** Written by Carol Saraceno; Directed by Allen Reisner; airdate: August 17, 1977; *Guest Cast:* Joanna Pettet, Gary Collins, Herbert Edelman, Nina Weintraub, Patricia Smith.

A secret admirer becomes a threat to a lovely young woman when his persistent phone calls and gifts take an ominous turn.

**8. “No Way Out”** Written by James Schmerer; Directed by Walter Grauman; airdate: August 24, 1977; *Guest Cast:* Bill Bixby, Dean Stockwell, Robert Pine, Hal England, Robert Hogan, Sheila Larken.

A man who has made many mistakes raising his son is unexpectedly flung two decades into the future by a freak time warp. He finds, to his sadness, that his adult offspring is making all the same mistakes with his son that he already made himself. But can he return, change the future, and save his family, or is it all written in stone?

## ***The Next Step Beyond* (1978–1979)**

### **CRITICAL RECEPTION**

“*The Next Step Beyond* is that rare kind of project that could leave demanding critics slipping into weepy gratitude for the existence of game shows ... stupefying in its sincere exploitation of junk.”—John J. O’Connor, *The New York Times*: “TV: The Psychics of *Step Beyond*,” Thursday, January 5, 1978.

### **FORMAT**

According to the 1978 series *The Next Step Beyond*, psychic powers *are* real, and it is only a matter of time before “the new science” of parapsychology charts these unusual abilities (telepathy, astral projection, etcetera) to their fullest potential. Each episode of this syndicated, 30-minute anthology thus focuses on a normal person (or persons) who unexpectedly encounters the world of psychic phenomena. In most of the twenty-five stories dramatized, the “next step” into the world of psychic phenomena is a positive experience which saves lives, rights the scales of justice, or solves a mystery. John Newland, the host of *One Step Beyond*, is back as “your host” for this short-lived anthology shot mostly on videotape, and he begins and closes each story with a brief commentary. Unlike *One Step Beyond*, wherein Newland was often on a shadowy stage separate from the main action of the individual episodes, in *The Next Step Beyond* he is fully integrated in the action: peering into operating rooms (“The Return of Cary DeWitt”), sitting on park benches (“To Fight a Ghost”) or even peering over a dam where a fatal accident was said to take place (“Possessed”). In *One Step Beyond*, so-called documentation was often offered in very specific terms, so that the events of the amazing story could be corroborated. In some cases, the participants in the real-life events were even called to the sets as expert “witnesses.” In *The Next Step Beyond*, such documentation was missing or sketchy, with Newland frequently asserting that the stories were true and that some of them were even covered “in all the major newspapers.” Additionally, a large percentage of *The Next Step Beyond* episodes are (inferior) remakes of *One Step Beyond* stories.

### **HISTORY**

*One Step Beyond* (1959-61) remains a great TV series even forty years after its debut on ABC television. It is a moody, atmospheric, black and white, 30-minute anthology which is every bit the equal of its better known contemporary, *The Twilight Zone*. This unique “occult” series, a deadpan examination of supernatural and psychic phenomena, ran for an impressive three years and 96 episodes, never straying from its Tuesday night time slot at 10:00 P.M. *One Step Beyond*, also known as *Alcoa Presents*, was hosted and directed by John Newland, a tall, laconic actor who had appeared in dramatic series such as *The Loretta Young Show* (1953-61), *One Man’s Family* (1949-52) as well as anthologies such as *Robert Montgomery Presents* (1950-57), and *The Web* (1950-57). It was written primarily by Merwin Gerard (*The Fantastic Journey*: “Vortex” [1977]) and Collier Young, and the series was, and remains, a classic. It deserves a great deal more attention than it has ever received, and it is probably fair to assert that it has never been able to stand outside the considerable shadow of *The Twilight Zone*, or even the later *Outer Limits*.

*One Step Beyond* is a great TV show because it dealt honestly with its horrific subject matter. It was never a tongue-in-cheek series, and humor of any variety was usually absent from the proceedings. Instead, viewers who tuned in were treated to a respectful anthology which attempted to terrify at the same time it hoped to enlighten people about “psychic” phenomena. Buttressed by great guest stars such as Patrick Macnee (in “Night of April 14”), Cloris Leachman (“The Dark Room”), Jack Lord (in “Father Image”), Robert Loggia (“The Hand”), William Shatner (in “The Promise”), Charles Bronson (in “The Last Round”), Robert Lansing (“The Voice”), Donald Pleasence (in “The Confession”), Christopher Lee in (“The Sorcerer”) and Warren Beatty in (“The Visitor”), the series was always well acted. Perhaps more significant than the fine cast was the fantastic, feature-film quality cinematography. Each episode of *One Step Beyond* was bathed in shadowy black and white photography and was a stark exercise in stylish horror. And, delightfully, this series offered documentation as to the authenticity of the “psychic phenomena” it examined, whenever feasible. This documentation was not merely a mention of a story in “some newspapers,” but rather specific, traceable information. In one notable story, John Newland presented a unique book called *Futility* that was published in 1898. It was about the disastrous maiden voyage of the world’s largest ocean liner, the *Titan*. The writing and release of the book preceded the actual *Titanic* sinking by 14 years, even though all the details of the sinking were ... virtually ... correct. Other stories were equally creepy.

The overall goal of *One Step Beyond* was not just to inspire goose bumps (which it did extraordinarily well) but to introduce the lexicon of psychic phenomena to a mass audience unaware (or afraid) of things such as ESP, mental telepathy, mind-altering hallucinogens, and the like. This thesis was introduced each week in the anthology’s opening narration:

Have you ever been certain the telephone would ring within the next ten seconds? Or have you ever walked down a street and had the feeling you knew what lay beyond the unturned corner? Then you’ve had a brief encounter with the unknown, a small step beyond. Now take a giant one.<sup>1</sup>

By the 1970s, *One Step Beyond* had accomplished its mission via syndication. It had guided American TV audiences on that “giant” step beyond by becoming a permanent fixture in local reruns. It often aired late at night, sometimes as a companion piece to *The Twilight Zone*, and it even maintained a cult following. Meanwhile, the talented John Newland kept busy as a TV director, helming episodes of *Star Trek* (“Errand of Mercy”), *Rod Serling’s Night Gallery* (“There Aren’t Any More MacBanes”), *The Sixth Sense* (“Dear Joan: We Are Going to Scare You to Death,” “Through a Flame, Darkly,” “And Scream by the Light of the Moon”) and supernatural TV movies such as *Don’t Be Afraid of the Dark* (1973). Considering the popularity of their fifteen-year-old series, originators John Newland, Collier Young, and Merwin Gerard teamed with producer Alan Jay Factor in 1977 to create a *One Step Beyond* revival called, naturally, *The Next Step Beyond*. In an interview with *Starlog* magazine in 1987, Newland described his follow-up effort:

We shot 24 half-hour episodes for a syndicated series ... a sequel in color that retained the same flavor and format of the earlier show. Merwin Gerard was the writer/creator and I was the host/director. The shows were equally good, but the series just didn’t make it.... Frankly, viewers ... just didn’t want to see an older, fatter John Newland.<sup>2</sup>

Unfortunately, that remark does not reflect some changes that had occurred between *One Step Beyond* and *The Next Step Beyond*. As mentioned, the 1978 series was shot in color, significantly mitigating the frightening atmosphere of the series, but more troubling than that technological improvement was

the fact that the series was lensed on a very low budget, lacking a big-pocket sponsor such as aluminum company Alcoa. Thus *The Next Step Beyond* was shot on videotape ... a cheap expedient which made the revival look about as stylish as a local news station weather report. In fairness, this visual cheapness was recognized as a serious problem, and the last half of the series was shot on 16 mm film, but by then much of the damage was already done. Additionally, there was no money available for expensive actors on *The Next Step Beyond*, and consequently many of the episodes featured no recognizable performers. The result was, for the most, a very poorly acted show. Although *Star Trek* alumni Majel Barrett (Nurse Christine Chapel), Grace Lee Whitney (Yeoman Janice Rand) and William Campbell (Captain Koloth) and *Lost in Space* alumnus Mark Goddard (Major Don West) made appearances in the series, most of the acting chops seemed to be handled by nonprofessionals who knew little of technique. Adding to the problems, a full fourth of the “new” shows appeared to be straight remakes of the best *One Step Beyond* episodes, rather than original stories. And, though some episodes were shot partially in far-off, exotic locations like Tahiti (“The Return of Cary DeWitt”), a greater number of stories seemed to be set in motel rooms and other humdrum locales which were presumably quite affordable. A primary appeal of the enduring *One Step Beyond* was its range of story settings: some tales were set at the turn of the century (“Ordeal on Locust Street”), during the Revolutionary War (“Night of Decision”), World War II (“The Dream”), after the Lincoln assassination (“The Day the World Wept”) and even the present (“Anniversary of a Murder”). Even more interestingly, the series experimented with a “documentary” approach in episodes such as “The Sacred Mushroom.” When push came to shove, the entire *One Step Beyond* company changed venues completely and filmed its last 13 episodes in Great Britain. Hamstrung by its budget, *The Next Step Beyond* is forever mired in ’70s melodrama and cheesy videotape.

Because it was a low-budget production with only a recognizable “name” and host as “pluses,” *Next Step Beyond* was often poorly scheduled in syndication in the wee hours of the morning. *The Next Step Beyond* was canceled after 25 episodes, just one season, and today few people (or reviewers) seem to remember it at all. It has never aired on the Sci-Fi Channel, but it was briefly rerun on a Canadian station, CKVR, during the mid-1980s. Interestingly, *The Next Step Beyond* predated the sci-fi/anthology revivals of the late ’80s and ’90s by almost a decade. In recent years, expensive revivals of *Star Trek*, *Alfred Hitchcock Presents*, *The Twilight Zone*, and *The Outer Limits* have all found varying degrees of success. By being ahead of its time, a time when syndication equaled “low-budget” rather than high-quality, *The Next Step Beyond* failed to speak to the next generation it so desperately needed to survive.

### CRITICAL COMMENTARY

It is sad and disappointing to report that *The Next Step Beyond* is merely a sequel rather than an equal to its prestigious and high-quality network predecessor. Part of the problem is the pitch: this is a TV series that promises in its very title to transport viewers further than the original series did (to a *next step beyond*). In point of fact, this syndicated follow-up manages to do no more than reiterate the same *One Step Beyond* stories and themes, but minus good actors, minus stylish cinematography, minus special effects of any kind, minus documentation, and minus even the appeal of varied and interesting settings. Series producer/writer Merwin Gerard, the man responsible for most of the teleplays in *The Next Step Beyond*, has gone on record stating that there are only fifteen good psychic phenomena stories to tell. *One Step Beyond* ran for 96 episodes, and all of them were variations on those fifteen, but the series remained stylish and interesting via cinematography, performance, and the frequent changing of settings. In the 1978 series, the same stories are again being trotted out—with no

improvements, no additional thinking or rethinking, and dramatically worse production values. The title suggests a multiplication or progression in storytelling and intensity, but *The Next Step Beyond* feels like *One Step Backwards*, not a bold step into the larger, and fascinating, world of psychic phenomena. Perhaps it is because the same men worked on the show. Remember, *Star Trek: The Next Generation* did not come into its own with original stories until after *Star Trek* originator Gene Roddenberry had passed the torch to the younger Rick Berman. *The Next Step Beyond* never had a “changing of the guard” and consequently the themes so interesting back in the late 1950s and early 1960s seemed antique when revived in 1978.

The sinking feeling of sameness, that the stories had all been done before, also originated from the fact that no less than eight *Next Step Beyond* stories were blow-by-blow remakes of *One Step Beyond*. “The Bride Possessed” was reshot as “Possessed.” “The Return of Mitchell Campion” was regurgitated as the dreadful “The Return of Cary DeWitt.” “Father Image” was recycled into “Key to Yesterday.” “Thunderbolt” was a reworking of “Forked Lightning.” It went on and on, with “Tidal Wave,” “Rendezvous,” “Tonight at 12:17” and “The Room Upstairs” episodes of *One Step Beyond* remade as “Tsunami,” “To Fight a Ghost,” “Dream of Disaster,” and “Sin of Omission.” Amidst all these rehashes, one constantly had to ask the question: Why bother to remake on videotape, and with amateurish actors, something that had been done so well on film, with excellent acting, the first time around? Additionally, *One Step Beyond* always had a sense of verisimilitude in its approach. Though studio-bound, its sets were excellent and, at the very least, interesting. Not so with *The Next Step Beyond*, which featured stories set in a high school gym (“The Love Connection”), a cinder-block room which doubled as a police station (“Possessed”), and an air traffic control tower (“Dream of Disaster”). Worse, the lighting was all “natural,” which meant that there was dreadful sun glare in some shots. Although low-budget productions can and do frequently overcome financial shortcoming with ingenuity and style (witness Australia’s *The Evil Touch* or the recent hit film *The Blair Witch Project*), *The Next Step Beyond* was a flop because it was uninventive *and* it was cheap-looking. Throw in awkward staging and some cheesy “computer animated” graphics during the opening sequence, and there was very little of interest in this TV series, except the fine, and eerie, theme music composed by Mark Snow (of *The X-Files*).

*The Next Step Beyond* had another quirk as well. Although it retained *One Step Beyond*’s focus on the paranormal by featuring stories about clairvoyant writing (“Greed”), premonitions (“Dream of Disaster”), reincarnation (“The Love Connection”), possession (“Possessed”) and astral projection (“Out of Body”), it also added a sort of “soap opera,” or melodramatic element that the previous series never adopted. As a series of 25 stories, *The Next Step Beyond* tried to make the unique argument that psychic experiences could heal psychological scars and were actually therapeutic and cathartic rather than purely horrific. In “Possessed,” a couple was constantly bickering until the wife was possessed by the spirit of a dead woman. The husband had to support his troubled wife, and the couple emerged “stronger” from the unifying experience. In “Sin of Omission,” a woman refused to bear children because she feared that the insanity which ran in her family would infect her offspring. After experiencing a psychic vision of a dead child along with her skeptical husband (Mark Goddard), the woman found the courage to bear children and face life. In “To Fight a Ghost,” a woman named Cathy needed closure regarding the disappearance of her first husband before she could, in good conscience, marry another man. Her husband’s ghost then obligingly showed up, not just to defend Cathy from a rapist in the park, but to provide her with the closure she needed to successfully move on. In “Out of Body,” a man wrongly convicted of murder used astral projection as a weapon to right the scales of justice and correct a grievous wrong. And so on. This element of *The Next Step Beyond*, coupled with

the videotape photography and awkward staging, made the show resemble daytime afternoon television.

Despite the shortcomings, there was considerable horror on *The Next Step Beyond* too. In direct contrast to the notion that psychic phenomena could be helpful was the episode "The Haunted Inn," a terrifying little tale in which malevolent, white-eyed ghosts actually murdered the living! James Keach played an artist who was directed by a strange woman to an isolated mountain resort. He decided to stay, and even fell in love with a beautiful young woman there. As it turned out, she was no lady, but a vicious spirit. This spectral lover came to Keach in the dead of the night and when he playfully rolled her over on the bed, he suddenly saw a horrible, laughing face dominated by dead, blank eyes. Keach fled the house in terror, and brought back the authorities the next morning only to learn that the inn where he had stayed the night before had actually burned down years before. Worse than that, the malevolent spirits had left behind "real" evidence of the haunting: the corpse of a curious ghost story writer who was also staying with Keach. "The Haunted Inn" was, perhaps, predictable, but it was also scary and tautly scripted. It was the pinnacle of a "psychic phenomena" show that could not really hold a candle to its illustrious predecessor.

Sadly, *The Next Step Beyond* was not a step forward, only a disappointment, and it is remembered today as a seldom-seen footnote to a classic series.

## CAST AND CREDITS

*Cast:* John Newland (Your Host).

*Credits:* Executive Producer: Collier Young. Produced by: Alan Jay Factor. Created by: Merwin Gerard. Executive Story Consultant: Merwin Gerard. Co-Producer: Mitchell Gamson. Director of Photography: Mike Sweeten. Art Director: Elayne Barbara Ceder. Music: Ron Ramin, Mark Snow. Theme: Mark Snow. Assistant Directors: Gary M. Lapoten, David Nicksay. Associate Director: Shelley Jensen. Stage Managers: Mitchell L. Factor, Gary Gamson. Casting: Marvin Page. Assistant Casting: Skitch Hendricks. Editors: Bernard Gribble, Douglass M. Stewart, Jr., Phil Tucker. Postproduction Supervisor: Phil Tucker. Mixer: Bill Edmondson. Property Masters: Alan and Cliff Bernay. Key Grip: Doug Campbell. Transportation Captain: Tom Blomquist. Gaffer: Ted Holt. Makeup: Penelope Staley. Hairdresser: Trilby Taylor. Costumer: Cheryl Beasley. Script Supervisor: Andrea Walzer. Location Managers: Michael Meehan, Jim Tedevac, Ron Windred. Assistant to Producer: Rivian Bell. Secretary to Producer: Cheryl Davis. Production Auditor: Norman Marcus. Production Assistant: Mimi Rothman. Production Secretary: Deborah. Videotape Facilities Furnished by: Compact Video Systems, Inc. Animation Title by: Image West Ltd. The Factor-Newland Production Corporation.

## EPISODE GUIDE

*Note:* (Since *The Next Step Beyond* was a syndicated series, airdates vary from city-to-city. The dates below reflect New York City airdates.)

**1. "Tsunami"** Written by Merwin Gerard; Directed by John Newland; airdate: January 5, 1978; *Guest Cast:* Laraine Stephens; Craig Littler; Angus Duncan; Bryan Scott; Dee Carroll; Martin Rudy; William Wintersole.



On the West Coast, an autistic 12-year-old boy is the only person aware of an approaching tidal wave, but how can he communicate this critical information to all those in danger?

*Note:* This episode is a remake of the *One Step Beyond* episode “Tidal Wave,” first aired August 30, 1960.

**2. “The Return of Cary DeWitt”** Written by Merwin Gerard; Directed by John Newland; airdate: September 13, 1978; *Guest Cast:* Lewis Van Bergen (Cary DeWitt); Alan Frost (Sergeant Renaud); Karin Mani (Tiare); Wendy Cutler (The Hotel Clerk); Anakorita (Madame Auber); Micheal Rougas (George Mason); Lainie Miller (The Nurse); Milton Perlow (The Anesthesiologist); Paul Hampton (The Surgeon).

Following an appendectomy with complications, Cary DeWitt awakens after a ten-day coma. When he visits Tahiti soon after his recovery, however, everybody insists he has been there recently ... despite the fact his body was unconscious and 6,000 miles away in a hospital! Worse, DeWitt’s “waking spirit” racked up a sizable hotel debt, and had an affair with a beautiful, and important, young native named Tiare.

*Note:* This episode is a remake of the *One Step Beyond* episode “The Return of Mitchell Campion,” first aired April 7, 1959.

**3. “Possessed”** Written by Merwin Gerard; Directed by John Newland; airdate: September 20, 1978; *Guest Cast:* Tony Bull Bua (Caroline Adams); Gene Bua (Paul Adams); Biff Elliot (The Sergeant); Sam Chew (Dr. Green); Bobb Hopkins (Officer Gates); Warren W. Smith (The Guard); Marco Lopez (Romero Robles).

A couple desperate to save their marriage embark on a doomed road trip. As they drive over a dam, wife Caroline is suddenly possessed by the spirit of a dead Hispanic woman. Her husband and the authorities are confounded by the event, but the possession has a purpose: dead Maria Robles wants to prove that her husband, incarcerated in the local jail, did not murder her.

*Note:* This episode is a remake of the *One Step Beyond* premiere episode “A Bride Possessed,” with a few variations.

**4. “The Love Connection”** Written by Christopher Lofton; Story by Merwin Gerard; Directed by John Newland; airdate: September 27, 1978; *Guest Cast:* Luana Anders (Harriet Jessup); Jean Gillespie (Alice); Michael Bell (Jeff August); Miles Shearer (Frank Jessup); Lola Fisher (Helen August); Paul Kent (Dr. Morgan); Kelly Gallagher (Jill August); Ray Duke (John Benson); Shawn Michaels (Officer Davis); Lisa Moore (The Nurse); Diana Butler (Sandra).

There is a strange, psychic bond between young gymnast Jill August and the catatonic, mourning Harriet Jessup ... despite the fact the two have never met. When Jill awakens from an unexpected coma, she is possessed by the spirit of Harriet’s dead daughter, Karen. Karen’s purpose in returning from the beyond is to tell her grieving mother that love never dies.

**5. “Ondine’s Curse”** Written by Merwin Gerard; Directed by John Newland; airdate: October 4, 1978; *Guest Cast:* Meredith MacRae (Sara); Nick Holt (Tom); Robert Cleaves (Anderson); Christopher Ellis (Hitchhiker).

A man suffering from Ondine's Curse, a rare condition which mimics death, is left for dead after an encounter with a violent hitchhiker. His wife, the only person aware of his strange condition, utilizes her psychic abilities to locate her husband before he is laid to rest.

**6. "Dream of Disaster"** Written by Merwin Gerard; Directed by John Newland; airdate: October 11, 1978; *Guest Cast:* Mere-dith Baer (Helen Chambers); Peter Skinner (Harry Chambers); Leonard Stone (Dr. Whitwood); Eric Howell (Steve Colton).

A pregnant woman has fierce, violent nightmares of a plane crash in which a Cessna 172 goes down and crashes into her room. Her husband, an air-traffic controller, comes to believe her premonition as real-life events unfold just as she foresaw. He moves her to a motel for safety ... but that shift of location could be the very catalyst which triggers the disaster.

*Note:* This episode is a remake of the *One Step Beyond* episode "Tonight at 12:17," first aired December 6, 1960.

**7. "Ghost Town"** Written by Arthur C. Pierce; Directed by John Newland; airdate: October 18, 1978; *Guest Cast:* Kathleen King (Leslie DeLong); Paul Peterson (Mitch); Michael Stroka (Logan);

A fashion model inexplicably experiences a vision of murder, unaware that what she is witnessing is a crime more than a quarter-century old.

**8. "Drums at Midnight"** Written by Harry Spalding; Directed by John Newland; airdate: October 25, 1978; *Guest Cast:* Majel Barrett (Neva); Yvonne Regalado (Montine Gillespie); Crane Jackson (Dr. Deutsch); Sehdlon Allman (Cooperman); Josephine Premice (Mambo).

An angry would-be heir resorts to voodoo and witchery to get her share of the wealth when she learns that her young stepmother is the main beneficiary of her dead father's enormous estate. The would-be heir finds, however, that the black arts are not to be trifled with.

**9. "Portrait of the Mind"** Written by Jerry Sohl; Directed by Alan J. Factor; airdate: November 1, 1978; *Guest Cast:* William Campbell (Chad Campbell); Eloy Casados (Frank); Ana Alicia (Angela Mendoza); Edmund Stoiber (Sam).

When apprehended for the robbery of a liquor store, an innocent ex-con must depend on the psychic abilities of a police artist who can draw the psychic impressions left behind in the subconscious of the robbery eyewitnesses.

**10. "Other Voices"** Written by Arthur C. Pierce. Story by Merwin Gerard; Directed by Alan Jay Factor; airdate: November 8, 1978; *Guest Cast:* Robert Walker (Walter Hastings); Susan Keller (Carrie Jaris); H.M. Wynant (Frank Jeris); Audrey Christie (Elsie).

Upon his return home from a party, a man has a powerful premonition of a drunken party-goer murdering his wife. Hoping to prevent the act of murder, Walter acts on his unusual precognition.

**11. "A Matter of Pride"** Written by Peter Germano; Directed by John Newland; airdate: November 15, 1978; *Guest Cast:* Enrique Novi (Manny Guzman); Eileen Dietz (Melissa Guzman); Robert Contreras (Carlos); Martin Rudy (Dr. Hartfield).

A powerful hypnotic suggestion implanted before his last fight plagues down-on-his-luck boxer, Manny Guzman, and may be the only thing that can save a young diabetic from certain death.

**12. “The Ghost of Cellblock 2”** Written by Shelly Hartman and Clifford Campion; Directed by John Newland; airdate: November 22, 1978; *Guest Cast*: Lana Wood (Peg Enright); Kathleen Brown (Mary Sutter); Lee Warrick (Mrs. Jordan); Pat Renella (Doug Taylor).

A fifty-year-old murder and a vengeful spirit play roles in this unusual mystery about a young woman, mistakenly arrested, who finds herself in a haunted prison cell. Fortunately, the evil specter which compels the wrongfully accused woman to attempt suicide (and has caused the suicide of other prisoners over the years), has not reckoned on the support of a sympathetic prison guard named Enright.

**13. “The Legacy”** Written by Merwin Gerard; Directed by John Newland; airdate: November 29, 1978; *Guest Cast*: Stephen A. Clark (Alan); Delos V. Smith, Jr. (Gus); Tasha Lee Zemrus (Patty).

The ghost of a dead railroad worker utilizes his grandson’s highly-detailed toy railroad cars and diorama to pinpoint to authorities the exact locations where a ruthless criminal plans to derail trains.

**14. “Cry Baby”** Written by Ed Burnham; Directed by John Newland; airdate: December 6, 1978; *Guest Cast*: Simone Griffeth (Susan Elston); Joe Bratcher (Larry Elston); Michael Heit (The Man); Julie Parrish (Dr. Elizabeth Turner); George Skaff (The Doctor); Marcia Mohr (The Woman Patient).

While her husband is away for a weekend at a “back to nature” seminar, Susan Elston is cornered in their isolated mountain home by an intruder bent on rape. At the seminar, Susan’s husband hears the persistent cries of a baby—the cries of the as-yet unborn child in Susan’s stomach—calling him home to help his wife.

**15. “Greed”** Written by Merwin Gerard; Directed by John Newland; airdate: December 13, 1978; *Guest Cast*: Ben Andrews (Phillip Barlow); Elaine Princi (Jan Barlow); Virginia Leith (Mrs. Whittaker); Larry Watson (Robert Whittaker); Larry Barton (Manager); Gil Lamb (Man at Farm).

The Barlows, a financially troubled couple, face a future of bankruptcy, creditors, and debt. Forced to stay in a run-down hotel, the Barlows are shocked when a story that could solve all their problems materializes on Phil’s typewriter. The story concerns two brothers, the Whittakers, who succumb to greed and corruption in their mountain search for gold.

*Note*: This episode is a remake, of sorts, of the *One Step Beyond* episode “Dead Man’s Tale,” first aired on January 17, 1961.

**16. “Out of Body”** Written by Bernard Gerard; Directed by John Newland; airdate: December 20, 1978; *Guest Cast*: Lawrence Casey (David Peters); James Houghton (Randall Priest); Sandra McCully (Dorothy Peters); Henry Brandon (Prosecuting Attorney); Lee Anthony (William Goldman); Marland Proctor (Vincent Tanner); Jay Zuckerman (Jury Foreman); Deborah Alexos (Susan).

When Susan Lambert is found murdered in the mountains, her fiancé Randall Priest is arrested and tried for the crime, even though he insists he was far away, meditating, during the incident. When Randall is found guilty and incarcerated, he resorts to astral projection to torment his accuser—the

real perpetrator of the crime.

**17. “Key to Yesterday”** Written by Merwin Gerard; Directed by Alan Jay Factor; airdate: December 27, 1978; *Guest Cast:* David Gilliam (Daniel Gardner); Henry Brandon (Timothy Welling); Carol Connors (Valier McKay); Clint Young (Policeman); Sally Swift (Jessie).

Following his father’s death, a young man named Daniel reopens a theater closed nearly 30 years earlier. The establishment once belonged to Daniel’s father, and it could be the key to solving a murder committed long ago. As Daniel grows more intrigued by a psychic vision, he learns that adultery is the least of his father’s sins.

*Note:* This episode is a remake of the *One Step Beyond* episode “Father Image,” first aired December 15, 1959.

**18. “Woman in the Mirror”** Written by Merwin Gerard; Directed by John Newland; airdate: January 3, 1979; *Guest Cast:* Martine Beswicke (Helen Wiley); Noah Keen (Harold Cascomb); Craig Littler (Paul Marlin); Olive Dunbar (Mrs. Wyckoff); Louie Quinn (Ferris); John Lawrence (Bartender).

A man who has gotten away with the murder of his wife sees justice finally reach him each time he looks in a mirror. He is finally undone by his guilty conscience.

**19. “The Haunted Inn”** Written by Harry Spalding; Directed by Alan Jay Factor; airdate: January 10, 1979; *Guest Cast:* James Keach (Chris Stabler); Lorna Thayer (Mrs. Argus); Peter V. Baron (Mr. Peter Combs); Patricia Ann Joyce (Lucianne Court); Buck Young (Sheriff).

A lost traveler receives directions to a nearby inn from a beautiful woman in a flowing white gown. Once there, the traveler finds a mysterious home where the voices of ghosts can be heard clearly in the thick of the night. Along with Mrs. Argus, a ghost story writer, the traveler attempts to locate the source of the voices.

**20. “The Pact”** Written by Merwin Gerard; Directed by John Newland; airdate: January 17, 1979; *Guest Cast:* Tom Gerard (Teddy Mullins); Frank Ashmore (Peter Holmby); Lynn Benesch (Valerie); Diane Hale (Gypsy).

A gypsy prophecy from the distant past continues to haunt three siblings, even after twenty years. But is the prophecy actually a self-fulfilling one?

**21. “Sin of Omission”** Written by Merwin Gerard; Directed by Alan Jay Factor; airdate: January 24, 1979; *Guest Cast:* Mark Goddard (Larry Hollis); Zina Bethune (Diane Hollis); John Harding (Dr. Carl Ferris); Bill Zucker (Bart Hudson); Ray Stricklyn (Mr. Morrison); Rhonda Hopkins (Miss Morrison); Shannon White (The Child).

In the upstairs bedroom of their newly purchased house, Diane Hollis hears the cries of a child in pain. Diane believes she is going crazy, but soon she and her husband both witness apparitions in their living room. What they are witnessing, in fact, are projections of two very guilty consciences. The people who once owned the home allowed their terminally ill daughter to expire, and never told a soul that her death was not, strictly speaking, natural.

*Note:* This episode is a remake of the *One Step Beyond* episode "The Room Upstairs," first aired March 21, 1961.

**22. "Thunderbolt"** Written by Merwin Gerard; Directed by John Newland; airdate: January 31, 1979; *Guest Cast:* Debbie Lytton (Carolyn Peters); Thomas Bellin (Alex Peters); Ryan MacDonald (George Chambers); Anne Helm (Ellen Chambers); Gary Vinson (Factory Foreman); M.G. Kelly (Paramedic); Sonny Carber (Bank Security Guard); Paul Richards (Insurance Broker).

A freak storm spurs a shared premonition of death for two very different individuals.

*Note:* This episode is a remake of the *One Step Beyond* episode "Forked Lightning," first aired on November 17, 1959.

**23. "The Confession"** Written by Merwin Gerard; Directed by John Newland; airdate: February 7, 1979; *Guest Cast:* Grace Lee Whitney (Dr. Dorothy Alsworth); Paulette Breen (Maggie Graham); Michael Christian (Carl Graham); George Ball (Ben Morrison).

A man is convicted of murdering his wife, but he knows he is innocent ... despite a persistent mental fugue which seems to confirm his guilt. As events snowball, the man realizes he may be witnessing the mental confession of the killer.

**24. "Trance of Death"** Written by Arthur C. Pierce; Story by Merwin Gerard; Directed by John Newland; airdate: February 28, 1979; *Guest Cast:* Alexandra Morgan (Sharon Weaver); James Camino (Hank); Nancy Stevens (Christiana Hartford); Santy Josel (Tadashi); Colby Chester (Mark); Sandra Clark (Debbie).

After a freak accident during a karate class, Sharon Weaver begins to develop powerful psychic abilities ... abilities which come in handy when the daughter of a friend finds herself in deadly danger.

**25. "To Fight a Ghost"** Written by Harry G. Spalding; Story by Merwin Gerard; Directed by John Newland; airdate: March 7, 1979; *Guest Cast:* Brioni Farrell (Cathy LeMasters); Phillip Mark (Bill Maxwell); Lisa Pera (Mrs. Riva); Radames Pera (Elton Connors); Kathleen Bracken (Joan Watson); Russ Marin (Detective Gans); Dinah Anne Rogers (Eleanor Snyder); John Dresden (Second Man); Paul LeClair (Terry Canfield); Chuck Howerton (George LeMasters).

A lonely woman is desperate for closure after three years of worrying about her husband, an archaeologist missing and presumed dead in Venezuela. When she is attacked in the park by an ex-student, Cathy LeMasters gets her answer at long last, and the spirit of her husband comes to her defense.

*Note:* This episode is a remake of the *One Step Beyond* episode "Rendezvous," first aired December 27, 1960.

## *Cliffhangers: The Curse of Dracula (1979)*

### CRITICAL RECEPTION

“Made in the style of the 1930s movie serials, this network disaster offered not one but three cliffhangers.... The third—and by far the most entertaining—was *The Curse of Dracula* played fang-in-cheek on a contemporary California campus where the undead count is a teacher with a lust for coeds. Suspense was conspicuously missing.”—Gene Wright, *The Science Fiction Image*, Facts-on-File Publications, 1983, page 82.

“Corny but colorful stuff, with memorable lines of dialogue as the vampire-hunter and girlfriend ... close in on the articulate, oft-poetic bloodsucker.”—John Stanley, *Creature Features Movie Guide Strikes Again*, 1994, page 447.

### FORMAT

*Cliffhangers* (also known in some circles as *Cliff Hangers*) is a memorable and unique, if failed, network attempt to create something out of the ordinary, specifically to recapture the excitement and innocence of yesteryear by presenting three 20-minute serials per prime-time hour. Each of the three serials featured on this Kenneth Johnson-created series is an updated version of the stylish 1930s-50s cliffhangers such as *Flash Gordon* (1936), *Buck Rogers* (1939), *Radar Men from the Moon* (1952), *Zombies of the Stratosphere* (1945), and the like.

The first serial in each hour was *Stop Susan Williams*, a non-genre adventure in the mode of *Perils of Pauline*, but updated to the 1970s. The second adventure was a variation on the Gene Autry serial *The Phantom Empire* (1935) called *The Secret Empire*. The third such serial of *Cliffhangers*, and the subject of this chapter, is the serial entitled *The Curse of Dracula*. It is also referred to in some circles as *Dracula '79* and *World of Dracula*. Unlike its two quarter-hour companions, *Curse of Dracula* actually completed its 15-chapter run (primarily because it started in mid-story, at chapter 6) before the series was canceled.

In *The Curse of Dracula*, the 512-year-old vampire from Transylvania is now (in the hip '70s) a professor of East European history teaching nights at scenic Southbay College in San Francisco. His teaching method is simple: he recounts personal experiences, describes the interior decorations of famous historical mansions, and even comments on the bosom size of women of the time ... as if he was really there (which of course, he was). During the course of the serial, Kurt Van Helsing, the grandson of Dracula's first nemesis, teams with Mary Gibbons, the daughter of one of Dracula's many victims, to expose and kill the deadly, aged vampire. The primary mission of this duo is to destroy all 20 of Dracula's hidden coffins so that the dark lord will have no place to sleep at night and thus succumb to daylight. As the serial begins, 13 of Dracula's coffins have been destroyed, leaving him only seven such resting places, which are hidden at “strategic” locations all over the San Francisco area.

In the process of hunting Dracula, the heroes survive bombings, vampire attacks, vampire hypnosis, and even join forces with a mysterious woman named Amanda ... Mary's mother. Dracula is played

(by Michael Nouri) as a tragic hero who tells Mary that “there are many addictions ... but the most potent is the addiction to life.” While Mary and Kurt try to stop Dracula from killing again, Dracula sets his sights on converting Mary into one of his conquests. Unlike traditional vampire legend, in *Curse of Dracula* it takes three separate bites from Dracula to turn a person into a vampire. As the series progresses, Mary is bitten twice, making Dracula’s destruction more urgent. Dracula himself is portrayed humorously as a mixture of the ancient and the modern. He can communicate telepathically with animals such as dogs and crows, but he is not above driving a car or using the telephone when it suits his needs.

In chapter 15 of this drama, the evil Dracula is finally killed, and all is well. Or is it?

## HISTORY

Kenneth Johnson, creator and producer of *The Incredible Hulk* (1978-82), *V* (1984-85), and *Alien Nation* (1988-89) on TV, in 1979 masterminded the unusual hour-long series called *Cliffhangers* as part of NBC’s so-called “second season” (which began in January of that year.) *Cliffhangers* incorporated three serials per hour and began airing in February of 1979. Unfortunately, it was scheduled at 8:00 P.M. on Tuesday nights, and pitted against ABC’s powerhouse combo *Happy Days* (1974-84) and *Angie* (1979-80).

The first of the three serials on *Cliffhangers* was entitled *Stop Susan Williams* and it starred Susan Anton, Ray Walston, and Marj Dusay as it followed the adventure of Susan, a newspaper photographer attempting to expose a plot to detonate nuclear weapons near a Camp David peace summit meeting. The second serial was *The Secret Empire* and it featured *Star Trek*’s Mark Lenard as Thorval, the tyrannical leader of the underground kingdom known as Chimera. Thorval had enslaved his extraterrestrial populace and it was up to cowboy, marshal, and all-around good citizen Jim Donner (Geoffrey Scott) to stop him. Unlike either *Stop Susan Williams* or *The Curse of Dracula*, *The Secret Empire* actually reflected the ’30s and ’40s in that the above-ground scenes were lensed in black-and-white and the Chimeran scenes were shot in color. At the time of its airing, however, *The Secret Empire* generated some negative feedback regarding its many parallels to a particularly popular serial from the past. As *Starlog* reported:

*The Secret Empire* owes more than format to the serials. Its plot bears some striking similarities to the 1935 Gene Autry 12-parter *The Phantom Kingdom* ... Kenneth Johnson was unavailable for comment, but his office assures *Starlog* that Johnson’s original script bears no relation to the earlier version.<sup>1</sup>

If *The Secret Empire* was beset by negative buzz, *Cliffhangers*’ sole horror entry was just the opposite story. It generated positive notices not only for its ultramodern and tongue-in-cheek approach to the Dracula legend (an approach mimicked in 1990 by the syndicated *Dracula—The Series*), but for Michael Nouri’s charismatic (and campy) portrayal of Bram Stoker’s immortal count. So impressive was Nouri’s portrayal that the Count Dracula Society acknowledged him with an award for “Best TV Vampire” at their 17th annual gathering (held in Los Angeles).<sup>2</sup>

In spite of Nouri’s efforts to invigorate *The Curse of Dracula*, as well as those of director Sutton Roley (*The Sixth Sense* [1972]) and writer/producer/director Kenneth Johnson, *Cliffhangers* was canceled after only ten weeks on the air. Its final airing was May 1, 1979. In that short span, only *Curse of Dracula* was able to finish its story arc by the cancellation date. Though there were brief

discussions about spinning-off *The Curse of Dracula* into its own prime time series, the show never cast its reflection in prime time. Instead, several pieces of the serial were edited together into a TV movie entitled *The World of Dracula*, which has aired in syndication and even on the Sci-Fi Channel (on April 26, 1999, at 3:00 A.M.)

## CRITICAL COMMENTARY

How one feels about *Cliffhangers* and *The Curse of Dracula* depends largely on perspective. As an attempt to do something other than the usual, the series was high-concept and bold in conception. In execution, however, the series left some things to be desired. One of the problems the series' creators found, for instance, was that viewers who enjoyed *The Curse of Dracula* would tune out during the non-genre entry *Stop Susan Williams*, or that science fiction fans eager to watch *The Secret Empire* had no such interest in horror fare like *Dracula*. Additionally, the series had problems attracting younger viewers because it was designed almost exclusively as a nostalgia trip. It featured cards with title scrawls that read (in big letters) TO BE CONTINUED and even featured black-and-white photography. To those unfamiliar with *Undersea Kingdom* (1936) or *Darkest Africa* (1936), these affectations must have seemed bizarre indeed.

As for *The Curse of Dracula*, it was a camp hoot. It was funny (and witty) in the same manner that the popular Lorenzo Semple Jr. *Batman* (1966-69) TV series had been. In one ludicrous segment, Dracula (in his 1970s model automobile) is pulled over for running a red light by a police officer on a motorcycle. "You went through that light like a bat out of hell!" the cop says with dismay, and then asks Dracula for his driver's license. When Dracula cannot oblige, he kills the cop, but not before observing that the light was yellow. After all, Dracula tells the unwitting cop, he knows the color "red" when he sees it. On occasions such as this, the writers on *The Curse of Dracula* seemed to poke fun at vampire lore, Dracula himself, and even the horror genre, as a whole, with such bizarre commentary. Among the juicy *bons mots* on *Curse of Dracula*: a drunken businessman asks a female vampire if she likes to "neck," and, during a meeting with the count, Mary reports of her handy crucifix that she "never leaves home without it." For those who had a sense of humor about such things, it was undeniably a great deal of (camp) fun. Yet, for those who took their horror seriously (as comic book fans took the character of Batman seriously), *The Curse of Dracula* at times could seem a slap in the face.

Still, if one were looking for interesting characterization, *Curse of Dracula* could fit the bill every now and then. In one episode of the serial, Dracula bemoans the fact that he has not seen the sun for 500 years, and in another, a sympathetic vampire reports that Dracula was born in a different "moral climate" than the 20th century, indicating that when Dracula was "cursed" with vampirism, human life was not worth as much as it is today. These are interesting moments on a short-lived series that tended to go from one confrontation (in a phone booth, in an ancient coffin, hanging over the distant floor of a tall warehouse, etc.) to another with a breezy, but superficial, kind of charm.

One thing is for certain regarding *Cliffhangers*: a rerun is definitely in order. Sometimes the test of time is the best yardstick by which to judge a TV series, and it might be curious to watch this series again today (20 years later) in its original format. *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* and other contemporary series have so nimbly incorporated humor into horror conventions, so it might be curious to see if *Cliffhangers* managed the same feat two decades earlier. Considering the track record of Kenneth Johnson, *Cliffhangers* might be worth a second look. Any takers?



## CAST AND CREDITS

*Cast:* Brad Crandall (Narrator); Michael Nouri (Count Dracula); Stephen Johnson (Kurt Van Helsing); Carol Baxter (Mary Gibbons); Louise Sorel (Amanda Gibbons); Antoinette Stella (Antoinette); Mark Montgomery (Darryl); Bever-Leigh Banfield (Christine); Jo Anne Strauss (Sister Theresa)

*Credits:* *Creator:* Kenneth Johnson. *Producers:* Richard Milton, Paul Samuelson. *Supervising Producer:* B.W. Sandefur. *Executive Producer:* Kenneth Johnson. *Music:* Joe Harnell, Charles R. Casey, Les Baxter. *Theme Music:* Joe Harnell. *Directors of Photography:* Robert F. Liu, Mario DiLeo. *Associate Producers:* Laura R. Rakowitz, Dean S. Zanetos, Daniel Fee. *Executive Story Consultants:* Renee and Harry Longstreet. *Art Director:* Gary A. Lee. *Film Editor:* Gene Palmer, Edward W. Williams, Lawrence J. Vallario. *Set Decorator:* Tony Considine. *Sound:* William Tremellen. *Casting:* Phil Benjamin. *Titles and Optical:* Universal Title. *Unit Production Manager:* James M. Walters, Jr. *First Assistant Directors:* George J. Light, Frank Crawford. *Second Assistant Director:* J.J. Candrella. *Music Editor:* Stan G. Davis. *Costume Designer:* Charles Waldo. *Costume Supervisor:* Jerry Herrin. *Paintings:* Jacoslav Gebr.

## EPISODE GUIDE

*Note:* The ten 20-minute segments of *The Curse of Dracula* combine to form one fast-moving story (as detailed in the format section above). Each tale picks up immediately where the last one left off, and culminates with a life-threatening cliffhanger (hence the title). The overall plot concerns two major strands: Dracula's attempt to make Mary his new "bride," and Van Helsing and Mary's effort to locate and destroy all twenty of Dracula's coffins.

**1. Chapter 6: "Lifblood"** Written and directed by Kenneth Johnson; airdate: February 27, 1979.

Masquerading as a student, Mary attends Dracula's night class at Southbay College, and returns to his secluded mansion with a few other students (all vampires) to stargaze. Dracula sees through Mary's disguise, and sets a deadly trap for Van Helsing, puncturing the fuel line in his car.

**2. Chapter 7: "Blood Streams"** Written by Renee and Harvey Longstreet; Directed by Jeffrey Hayden; airdate: March 6, 1979.

Mary escapes from Dracula's mansion on foot after a half-remembered encounter with the vampire in his boudoir. Mary finds Van Helsing, who has survived a deadly car crash, and takes him to the hospital.

**3. Chapter 8: "Demons of the Dark"** Written by Myla Lichtman; Directed by Bib Osterwald; airdate: March 13, 1979.

Two of Dracula's cronies attempt to murder Van Helsing while he recovers in the hospital, and Mary meets secretly with Dracula. Although the count promises not to harm her, his assistant, a jealous woman, releases Dracula's hellhounds to murder Mary.

**4. Chapter 9: "Depository of Death"** Written by Craig Buck; Directed by Jeffrey Hayden; airdate: March 20, 1979.

Mary discovers, to her chagrin, that she bears the mark of Dracula. Van Helsing promises to save her, but Mary finds herself growing increasingly attracted to Dracula, despite the knowledge that he killed her mother.

**5. Chapter 10: “Sepulcher of the Undead”** Written by Craig Buck; Directed by Jeffrey Hayden; airdate: March 27, 1979.

Mary and Van Helsing plan to meet with Dracula at a local bar, but Van Helsing is kidnapped and locked inside an ancient stone coffin at the local museum. Dracula and Mary meet at the piano (where Dracula plays “As Time Goes By”), and Mary grows ever weaker.

**6. Chapter 11: “Threshold of Eternity”** Written by Craig Buck; Directed by Sutton Roley; airdate: April 3, 1979.

As Mary surrenders herself to Dracula (and is bitten for the second time), Van Helsing is rescued from the crypt by a mysterious woman, a vampire herself! Van Helsing is reluctant to ally himself with this creature of the night, until she confesses her hatred for Dracula.

**7. Chapter 12: “Where Angels Fear to Tread”** Written by Craig Buck; Directed by Sutton Roley; airdate: April 10, 1979.

The female vampire who saved Van Helsing is revealed to be Amanda Gibbons, Mary’s mother. Amanda attempts to convince Mary that it is better to be human and “moral,” than a creature of the night who is enslaved by a never-ending blood-thirst.

**8. Chapter 13: “Sealed in Blood”** Written by Myla Lichtman; Directed by Richard Milton; airdate: April 17, 1979.

Mary is now part-vampire, and Dracula uses that fact to attempt a further seduction. Amanda and Van Helsing do their best to defend Mary from Dracula’s grip.

**9. Chapter 14: “Thirst for Death”** Written by Craig Buck; Directed by Richard Milton; airdate: April 24, 1979.

The final battle with Dracula is to be joined soon, but first Amanda and Van Helsing must sever Mary’s connection to the dark lord once and for all.

**10. Chapter 15: “Pleas of the Undead”** Written by Myla Lichtman; Directed by Richard Milton; airdate: May 1, 1979.

In a last confrontation, Van Helsing and Mary attempt to destroy Dracula’s sole remaining coffin, even as Dracula plans to strike back with a vengeance.

## ***Darkroom* (1981–1982)**

### **CRITICAL RECEPTION**

“about as wretched as anything ever to appear on TV ... Viewers would have been better off if all copies of the show had been tossed into a toxic waste dump.... The only mystery about *Darkroom* is how the talented James Coburn was ever convinced to host this abomination.”—William E. Anchors, Jr., *Epilog* #38: “Darkroom,” January 1994, page 29.

### **FORMAT**

*Darkroom* is a 60-minute anthology with some similarities to *Rod Serling’s The Night Gallery*. Like that early ’70s program, *Darkroom* follows a host (this time screen icon and 1998 Academy Award winner James Coburn) as he sits in a darkroom and points out various photographs, posters, magazines, and other arcana to the audience. These visual references (an issue of *Monsters Illustrated* in “The Bogeyman Will Get You,” a black-and-white family picture in “Stay Tuned, We’ll Be Right Back,” a poster of a fictional ’70s pin-up named Gina Mitchell in “Closed Circuit”) act in the same capacity as the portraits and statuary of *Night Gallery*, leading viewers into the drama with a visual hook. And, also like *Night Gallery*, *Darkroom* often features multiple stories per hour, rather than just one.

Each hour of *Darkroom* begins with an opening sequence in which a steadicam glides speedily (in slight fast-motion photography) through the upstairs level of an empty mansion. At almost ground level (which makes the house look quite menacing), the camera circles down and around a grand staircase, through various chambers, until it pauses at a closed door: the darkroom. On the soundtrack, frightening, electronic music accompanies James Coburn’s narration. He warns the audience that it has entered a house, maybe one it’s never seen, and that it senses something evil, beckoning. And then, he mentions that there is “terror” in the darkroom. After the title *Darkroom* then comes up, the camera finds Coburn as he introduces each story. The end credits of *Darkroom* show a single red lightbulb illuminating a black screen, while credits are displayed in the lower right-hand corner of the frame.

*Darkroom* is not dissimilar from *Night Gallery* in content either. Werewolves (“The Bogeyman Will Get You”), ancient curses (“Lost in Translation”), body snatchers (“Closed Circuit”), murderous people (“Exit Line,” “Who’s There?”), animated toys (“Siege of 31 August”) and even macabre historical adventures (“Guillotine”) are all featured in the short run of the series. Unlike some horror series, *Darkroom* does manage to garner considerable suspense in some installments, thanks in no small part to some frightening mood music by Craig Safan, David Shire, and Dan Wyman.

### **HISTORY**

*Darkroom* is a short-lived anthology that aired on Friday nights on ABC beginning in late November of 1981. Its competition on CBS was the popular *Dukes of Hazzard* (1979-84), so perhaps it is no surprise that the series only lasted for seven hour-long episodes.

Behind the scenes on *Darkroom* was producer Christopher Crowe, the man who would later become the creative backbone of the NBC revival of *Alfred Hitchcock Presents* (1985) as well as *Seven Days*, the UPN sci-fi series which debuted in the fall of 1998. Executive story consultant was Jeffrey Bloom, who later wrote the screenplay and directed the New Line Films production of the V.C. Andrews novel *Flowers in the Attic* (1985). In front of the camera (to play host) was James Coburn, a popular movie star (*Our Man Flint* [1966], *In Like Flint* [1967]), who had suffered some bad luck on television in the past. In the case of each of his previous series, *Acapulco* (1961) and *Klondike* (1960-61), cancellation had come before the completion of the first season. Alas, that luck did not change with *Darkroom*. According to Coburn, *Darkroom* failed to find an audience not only because it was placed against a popular, well-established series, but because its own network sabotaged the proceedings. In particular, Coburn felt that the previews and commercials (which preceded *Darkroom*'s broadcast) revealed the climactic action and twists of the stories yet to come. Like many others, Coburn was confounded by this bizarre practice, and found it difficult to explain:

You can't do that with mystery shows ... ABC used to love ... to tell the audience what was going to happen on their shows. Then, the viewers wouldn't be surprised.... It just blows the whole show! There's no reason to watch the damn thing.<sup>1</sup>

Regardless of ABC's penchant for revealing episode finales, *Darkroom* was still an interesting horror anthology. Another similarity with *Rod Serling's Night Gallery* was *Darkroom*'s frequent service as a training ground for talented young actors. Helen Hunt, the 1997 Academy Award Winner for Best Actress in *As Good as It Gets*, starred in "The Bogeyman Will Get You." Comedian Billy Crystal (*City Slickers* [1991], *My Giant* [1998]) showed up in "Make-up." These up-and-comers appeared opposite more established stars such as Richard Anderson (*The Six Million Dollar Man* [1974-78]), Ronny Cox (*Deliverance* [1972]), Claude Akins (*Battle for the Planet of the Apes* [1974]), June Lockhart (*Lost in Space* [1965-68]), Anne Lockhart (*Battlestar Galactica* [1978-79]), and Brian Dennehy (*Cocoon* [1987]).

Talent was evident elsewhere as well. Teleplays came from some of the best literary sources imaginable, such as Robert Bloch (*Psycho* [1960]), Frederic Brown (*Arena*), and Cornell Woolrich. Directing these stories were Rick Rosenthal (*Halloween II* [1981]), Paul Lynch (*Star Trek: The Next Generation*: "The Naked Now," "11001001," "Unnatural Selection") and Curtis Harrington (*Quinn Martin's Tales of the Unexpected* [1977]). Additionally, the stories showed great variety, dealing with everything from demonic cats ("Catnip") to time-paradoxes ("Stay Tuned, We'll Be Right Back").

In July of '82, long after *Darkroom* had been clobbered by the Duke boys on CBS, ABC tried again to find the show a spot on their schedule. Amazingly, they picked an even worse time slot: Thursday nights from 8:00 to 9:00. This time around, *Darkroom* was clobbered by *Knots Landing* on CBS, plus *Diff'rent Strokes* (1978-85) and *Gimme A Break* (1981-85) on NBC. Not surprisingly, *Darkroom* was put on hiatus and finally canceled.

In the mid-to-late 1980s, *Darkroom* re-emerged on the USA Network for a short time. In the '90s, it has resurfaced more frequently, and has been shown repeatedly as part of the Sci-Fi Channel's "Series Collection" along with *Planet of the Apes* [1974], *Fantastic Journey* [1977], *Automan* [1983], *Nightmare Cafe* [1992], and the like.

## CRITICAL COMMENTARY

Despite the comments found under the heading “Critical Reception” of this chapter, *Darkroom* is not really so terrible a series, especially considering the low quality of contemporary anthologies such as *Quinn Martin’s Tales of the Unexpected* and the dissatisfying 1978 *One Step Beyond* syndicated sequel. *Darkroom* is not a perfect anthology by any means, but it did feature some moments of genuine suspense and terror in its brief flicker across the national consciousness.

Perhaps *Darkroom*’s most talked-about (and most heavily hyped) installment is the 40-minute tale “Siege of 31 August.” In this entry, a Vietnam veteran named Neil (Ronny Cox), who committed atrocities during the war, is tormented by his son Ben’s toys—who seem to remember what Neil did to innocent villagers there. In the show’s finale, Cox (dressed in uniform and helmet) meets the enemy in his barn in a special effects extravaganza which is one part *Land of the Giants* (1968-70), one part *Gulliver’s Travels*, and one part *Small Soldiers* (1998). On a visual and effects level, it is a breathtaking climax. It is undeniably exciting to watch Cox do battle with miniature tanks, helicopters (suspended on wires), and infantry. No tricky shortcuts are utilized, and both Cox and his enemy are fully integrated into the same shots for this ambitiously designed and well-shot finale. It is a show-stopper, and a good effects moment.

Alas, beyond its undeniable visual appeal and feature film scope, “Siege of 31 August” is a failure in terms of drama. The story never really decides if Cox’s veteran should be despised (he is abusive to his wife, hard on his son, and an unrepentant liar) or empathized with (the teleplay points out that he *was* doing his duty in Vietnam, and he did lose his leg over there defending his country...). Because of this ambivalence in the writing, the final assault is less powerful than it could and should be. The audience never really understands why the toy soldiers attack Neil. Do these ambulatory toys represent the young boy’s hidden voice, his fear of the military, and of becoming like his father? Or is Neil simply being punished for his misdeeds abroad? If the latter is the case, then it is surely significant (or at least notable) that the little soldiers who go on the offensive are “American.”

Is “Siege of 31 August” saying that vets who did wrong in Vietnam are actually “under attack” from America, which does not support atrocities like murder, arson, and rape? Or is the message supposed to be a general one, that all Vietnam vets, regardless of their actions over there, are under attack by an America which does not understand what happened? Whatever the social relevance of this special effects laden story, it still emerges as a muddled hour of drama. Still, “Siege ...” reflects the fact that as late as 1981, mainstream America still had unresolved, even conflicting views about the Vietnam War. Vets are to be sympathized with and honored for their service, but there is also a queasy discomfort about this particular war. “Siege of 31 August” mirrors that distaste in its own, convoluted way. It takes as its subject matter the national demons which would later find voice in dramas such as Oliver Stone’s *Platoon* (1986) and Stanley Kubrick’s *Full Metal Jacket* (1987). Of course, this installment of *Darkroom* is nowhere near as eloquent as those films, but at least it was trying to deal with something important and unpleasant.

Other episodes of *Darkroom* attempt to look to the future. “Closed Circuit” by Alan Brennert posited the idea that people would soon become inconsequential in news programs and mass entertainment because their likenesses could simply be programmed or generated by a computer. In “Closed Circuit,” this process was called “electronic transmography” and it involved a computer simulation created in a “matrix box.” Although things have not quite happened in exactly the way the episode forecasts, the concept is still eerily timely today. “Closed Circuit” suggested that computerized actors, sets, and special effects would replace the real things because of expense, and that is exactly what *has*

happened in the closing days of the 20th century. Consider the “video toaster” (matrix box?) deployed for effects on *Babylon 5* and *SeaQuest DSV* (1992–1995), or the CGI backgrounds and people generated for the Oscar winning film *Titanic* (1997) and the new *Star Wars* picture, *The Phantom Menace* (1999). Minding these advances, “Closed Circuit” might be considered prophetic, even if its story of doppelgangers really looks back to *Invasion of the Body Snatchers* (1951) at the same time it peers anxiously into an uncertain future.

Also looking to the past, but in a more constructive way, perhaps, is another *Darkroom* episode entitled “Guillotine.” Based on a Cornell Woolrich story, this installment was set in France in 1897, and it was remarkably fresh-faced about its subject. A lovely young woman sets out to free her incarcerated husband, sleeping with various unattractive men in the process. Her real goal was to poison the keeper of the guillotine because an old law stipulated that if the executioner should die on execution day, the condemned prisoners could go free. Refreshingly, “Guillotine” makes no bones about the fact that its protagonist uses every weapon at her disposal, including sex and poison, to save her man (a criminal) from France’s “national razor.” It was an effective and suspenseful “ticking clock” story, especially in the last few minutes of the show, as the dying Monsieur de Paris, custodian of the blade, staggered towards the guillotine to kill the doomed man ... who had been assured by his love that he would not die on that day. Replete with lots of low-angle, cockeyed views of its deadly namesake, this *Darkroom* story really worked.

These isolated triumphs aside, *Darkroom* also featured some less-than-stellar moments. In the introduction to Robert Bloch’s “The Bogeyman Will Get You,” Coburn referred to horror legend Bela Lugosi in patronizing terms. “He was buried in his cape ... I guess he really thought he was a vampire...,” Coburn opined. It was a tasteless remark about a screen icon, and one wholly unnecessary in the context of the unrelated episode which followed.

*Darkroom* had enough ghoulish high-points (a dog sinking its teeth into a voodoo doll in “Needlepoint”; a nice old couple sawing off a bum’s legs in “Uncle George”; a drama critic getting her comeuppance in “Exit Line”; a man changing history and finding himself in 1980s Nazi America in “Stay Tuned, We’ll Be Right Back”) to make one wish the series had been afforded some time to grow and tweak. It may not be the best horror anthology covered in this text, but *Darkroom* is not the worst either.

## CAST AND CREDITS

*Cast:* James Coburn (Your Host).

*Credits:* *Executive Story Consultant:* Jeffrey Bloom. *Producers:* Christopher Crowe, Robert F. O’Neill. *Executive Producer:* Peter S. Fischer. *Associate Producers:* Skip Lusk, Medora Heilbron. *Theme:* David Shire. *Original Music:* Craig Safan, Dan Wyman. *Directors of Photography (various episodes):* Mario DiLeo, John McPherson, Harry L. Wolf. *Production Designer:* John W. Corso. *Art Directors:* James Allen, Mary Ann Biddle. *Set Decorators:* R. Lynn Smart, Marc E. Meyer Jr., Edward M. Parker. *Casting:* Ron Stephenson. *Film Editors (various episodes):* Donald Douglas, Edwin F. England, Ron Sawade, Robert Watts. *Sound:* Jim Alexander, Larry Hooberry. *Titles/Optical Effects:* Universal Title. *Unit Production Managers (various episodes):* Leonard Bram, Edward D. Markley. *First Assistant Director (various episodes):* Burt Bluestein, Paula Marcus, Robert M. Webb. *Second Assistant Director (various episodes):* Jan DeWitt, Carole Keligian. *Sound Effects Editor:* Jack May. *Music Editor:* Richard Lapham. *Costume Designer:* Charles Waldo. *Costume Supervisor:* Barry

Downing. *Special Makeup*: Joe Blasco. From Universal, an MCA Company.

## EPISODE GUIDE

**1A. “Closed Circuit”** Written by Alan Brennert; From a story by Carter Scholz; Directed by Rick Rosenthal; airdate: November 27, 1981; *Guest Cast*: Robert Webber (Greg Conway); Mary Frann (Linda Beckwith); John Randolph (Arthur Desmond); Richard Anderson (Bill Bellamy); John H. Fields (Frank Merriman); Lavelle Roby (Dr. Wilkerson); Lee Duncan (Steve); Cliff Frazier (Strongarm #1); Jon M. Benson (First Intern); Steve Whitmore (Engineer); James Purcell (Guard); Kate Williamson (Doctor); Rozelle Gayle (Arab); Micahel O’Guinne (Engineer #1); Robin Coleman (Second Intern).

Greg Conway, an underutilized but popular UBS anchor, is disturbed when a co-anchor, Arthur Desmond, disappears in Lodi, New Jersey, and then returns ... strangely altered. Conway believes his friend has been replaced by a double, and he soon finds himself in line for the same treatment—all in the name of better ratings.

**1B. “Stay Tuned, We’ll Be Right Back”** Written by Simon Muntner; Directed by Paul Lynch; airdate: November 27, 1981; *Guest Cast*: Lawrence Pressman (Charlie Miller); Joanna Miles (Janet Miller); Shane Butterworth (Kenny); Bert Freed (Charlie’s Dad); Robert Gray (Nazi).

Charlie and his son work together on a crystal radio set which mysteriously receives old Tom Mix shows, *Inner Sanctum*, and even Morse Code. One day, Charlie realizes he is receiving actual transmissions from the year 1942, the very year his father’s ship, *The Bradley Jones*, was sunk by the Nazis. Desperate to alter history and learn about the father he never knew, Charlie sends a message to his father’s ship ... with catastrophic results for his family, and for the Allies.

**2A. “The Bogeyman Will Get You”** Written by Robert Bloch; From a story by Robert Bloch; Directed by John McPherson; airdate: December 4, 1981; *Guest Cast*: Helen Hunt (Nancy Lawrence); Randolph Powell (Phil Ames); Quinn Cummings (DiDi); Arlen Dean Snyder (Professor Lawrence); Gloria DeHaven (Louise Lawrence); R.G. Armstong (Sheriff Dodson); Rick Beckner, William Edeward Phipps.

Returning from a drive-in movie, Nancy and her sister, DiDi, just miss hitting a man in the middle of the road. DiDi, a horror movie buff, believes that the man, Phil Ames, is a vampire responsible for the death of Nancy’s friend at a nearby lake. Nancy searches Phil’s house as she becomes romantically involved with him, but learns that DiDi’s suspicions are not quite correct.

**2B. “Uncle George”** Written by Peter S. Fischer; Directed by Rick Rosenthal; airdate: December 4, 1981; *Guest Cast*: Claude Akins (Bert Haskell); June Lockhart (Margo Haskell); Dub Taylor (Dixon “Dixie” Weeks); John Lawrence (Mr. Noland/Bartender); Dick Whittington (Uncle George); Charles Sassoon.

Uncle George passes away in his bed, forcing Bert and wife Margo to take desperate measures. Bert goes in search of an older gentleman to replace George, and to collect George’s disability checks from the government. Unfortunately, Bert and Margo neglect to tell their replacement that old Uncle George was an amputee.

**3A. “Needlepoint”** Written by Violet Pullbrook; Directed by Paul Lynch; airdate: December 11, 1981; *Guest Cast:* Esther Rolle (Old Woman); Lawrence-Hilton Jacobs (Young Man).

A black man suffering terrible pains visits an old woman in the woods whom he deems responsible for his suffering. His belief proves correct: the old woman, grandmother to a girl he has killed, has been sticking needles in a voodoo doll representation of him. Worse, she has a dog.

**3B. “Siege of 31 August”** Written by Peter S. Fischer; From a story by Davis Grubb; Directed by Peter Crane; airdate: December 11, 1981; *Guest Cast:* Ronny Cox (Neil); Gail Strickland (Helen); Patrick Brennan (Ben); Hank Brandt (Colonel Ryan); Pat Corley (Sheriff).

A disabled Vietnam vet working a farm purchases two “Company B” army sets for his ten-year-old son, Ben, who will be going off to a military academy at the end of the week. The toys come to life, and start to talk to Ben about his father’s activities in Vietnam. The father grows angry, suspecting his wife is responsible for filling his son’s head with ideas about burning villages and the murder of innocent Vietnamese, and soon the farm turns into a war zone.

**4A. “A Quiet Funeral”** Written by Robert Bloch; Directed by Curtis Harrington; airdate: December 18, 1981; *Guest Cast:* Robert Lyon (Marty); Eugene Roche (Charlie); Misty Rowe (Leda).

A car trunk filled with counterfeit money leads to danger, murder, and double-crosses for a wily ex-con and his girlfriend. Just as it seems the couple will get away with the loot, they are undone by a surprise appearance at a funeral.

**4B. “Make-up”** Written by Jeffrey Bloom; From a story by Robert R. McCammon; Directed by Curtis Harrington; airdate: December 18, 1981; *Guest Cast:* Billy Crystal (Paddy); Sian Barbara Allean (Brenda); Jack Kruschen (Sam); Brian Dennehy (Roland); Robert O’Reilly (Sebastian).

A magical makeup kit may be just the thing to help down-on-his-luck crook Paddy pay off his debts and prevent his eviction. Or, it could spell trouble for the desperate young man.

**5A. “The Partnership”** Written by Chris Crowe; From a story by William Nolan; Directed by John McPherson; airdate: December 25, 1981; *Guest Cast:* Pat Buttram (Tad Miller) David Carradine (Biker); Carole Cook (Sally).

A funhouse is a venue for horror as a biker stranded in a roadside diner makes a deadly bargain. A strange local, who used to run the dilapidated amusement park, will drive him into town if he agrees to go through the strange funhouse with him.

**5B. “Daisies”** Written by Peter S. Fischer; From a story by Frederic Brown; Directed by Paul Lynch; airdate: December 25, 1981; *Guest Cast:* Lloyd Bochner (Dr. Michaelson); Rue McClanahan (Louise Michaelson); Elizabeth Halliday (Ms. Wilson).

A doctor and his beautiful young assistant, Ms. Wilson, have been working on a method by which plants can communicate with human beings, and at the same time they have been carrying on an illicit love affair. The doctor’s wife learns of the affair ... from the doctor’s own plants ... and takes appropriate action.



**5C. “Catnip”** Written by Robert Bloch; Directed by Jeffrey Bloom; airdate: December 25, 1981; *Guest Cast:* Cyril O’Reilly (Ronnie); Jocelyn Brando (Mrs. Mingle); Lynn Carline (Ronnie’s Mother); Michael Gazzo (Nino); Karin Aregoud (Loretta).

A ubiquitous black cat and a persistent witch figure into a dishonest veteran’s plan to obtain illegal drugs.

**6A. “Lost in Translation”** Written by Mike Scheff and Maryann Kasica; Directed by Rick Rosenthal; airdate: January 8, 1982; *Guest Cast:* Andrew Prine (Dr. Paul Hudson); Whit Bissell (Arthur); Michael Zand (Translator/Ahfman Zamani); Cyndy Garvey (Jeanette Hudson).

Archaeologist Paul Hudson selects a translator to work on a secret scroll dating back to the period of the pharaoh of the Egyptian 18th dynasty. Unfortunately, the legend of the pharaoh is mistranslated, and Professor Hudson is diminished as a consequence.

**6B. “Guillotine”** Written by Peter Allan Fields; From a short story by Cornell Woolrich; Directed by Rick Rosenthal; airdate: January 8, 1982; *Guest Cast:* Patti D’Arbanville (Babette); France Benard (Pierre LaRouche); Michael Constantine (Monsieur de Paris); Logan Ramsey (Governor); Lilyan Chauvin (Madame LeClerc); David Daniels (Doctor); Dick Balduzzi (Louis); Robert Feero (Prisoner); Zale Kessler (Barber); Todd Martin (Gendarme); Peiter Jan Van Niel (Gate Guard); Alfred Dennis (Baker).

In Paris of 1875, a criminal scheduled to be executed by guillotine sends his beautiful lover to murder the Monsieur de Paris. If this gentleman, the custodian of the “national razor,” should die before the criminal is executed, the criminal will be spared. Unfortunately, the Monsieur de Paris considers duty his mistress, and is not so easy to kill.

**7A. “Exit Line”** Written by Peter S. Fischer; From a story by Richard Levinson and William Link; Directed by Peter Crane; airdate: January 15, 1982; *Guest Cast:* Samantha Eggar (Ms. Saint Claire); Jack Carter; Anne Lockhart.

A ruthless drama critic pans a play, and finds that her cruelty of spirit has repercussions. The play’s lead actor is a bit unstable, and he breaks into her apartment to urge her to reconsider her comments.

**7B. “Who’s There?”** by Brian Clemens; Directed by Peter Lynch; airdate: January 15, 1982; *Guest Cast:* Grant Goodeve (Steve Lambert); Diane Kay (Clair); Michael Lembeck (Barry).

A young man irritated by the perpetual squabbling of his upstairs neighbors in an apartment building inadvertently becomes enmeshed in their marital difficulties, and later stumbles into a murder plot.

**7C. “The Rarest of Wines”** Written by Gerald S. Siegel; Directed by Peter Crane; airdate: January 15, 1982; *Guest Cast:* Judith Chapman (Pamela); Henry Polic (Freddy).

Freddy is outraged when he is denied what he considers to be his “fair” share of his wealthy parents’ estate. He blames his hard-working sister Pamela, who has received the bulk of the inheritance, and then sets about to make a most unwise investment.

## *The Hitchhiker (1983–1991)*

### CRITICAL RECEPTION

“Each episode becomes a game of guessing when an opportunity would be devised for the featured performers to take off all their clothes. More often than not, this happens at least twice in the course of 30 minutes.... *The Hitchhiker* may still ... succeed, bringing to television the kind of short form thrillers that radio offered in ... *Suspense* and *Lights Out!* All in all, *The Hitchhiker* does seem to be ... serious about its scary entertainments.”—John J. O’Connor, *The New York Times*: “*The Hitchhiker* Series Suspense Tales on HBO,” November 26, 1985, page C22.

“The series features 30-minute stories that aspire to the *Twilight Zone* but end up looking more like bad comics with EC-style endings. Many of the episodes use gratuitous blood, gore and naked flesh, in place of good scripts and solid performances.”—Robert Greenberger, Chris Henderson, and Carr D’Angelo, *Starlog* Number 96: “Science Fiction Media, 1984-85,” page 35.

“For thumb people, this pseudo *Twilight Zone* has become a cult offering ... Grade: B.”—John Stark, *People*, July 3, 1989, page 9.

### FORMAT

In contrast to many modern horror TV series detailed in this text (with the exceptions of *Tales from the Crypt*, *Beyond Reality*, *Poltergeist: The Legacy*, *G vs E*), *The Hitchhiker* was born not on a network or in syndication, but on cable television. This little fact explains a great deal about *The Hitchhiker* because, make no mistake, this is a very unusual genre anthology. This HBO series is so different from other horror series because, freed from the restrictions of “mass audience” television, it is able to showcase graphic bloodletting, nudity, and even simulated sex. This all happens in a half-hour to boot!

Each episode of *The Hitchhiker* is initiated with a well-edited montage. A good-looking young man (first Nicholas Campbell, later Page Fletcher) strides across a deserted western highway wearing tight jeans and a faded leather jacket. With a backpack slung over one shoulder and thumb extended out, this nameless wanderer walks to the beat of an electronic, pulse-pounding theme song. The titles come up (in either red or yellow) and then the story proper begins. At the start of each macabre tale, the mysterious hitchhiker steps into the foreground of the shot and addresses the audience (and camera) directly. He cues the viewers in about the main character of this particular story, and then issues a vague moralistic warning before shuffling off-screen. At the end of the tale, the Hitchhiker is back, rewording his earlier narrations and making his warning a little more explicit.

The stories on *The Hitchhiker* are all 30 minutes along, and each one features at least some nudity (though “W.G.O.D.” was a notable exception). The stories tend to be rather unfocused so that each short story can accommodate a sex scene, even if it is unmotivated from a dramatic or character standpoint. As a new cable series on HBO, *The Hitchhiker* was well-peopled by celebrities including Karen Black, Harry Hamlin, Willem Dafoe, Margot Kidder, and the ubiquitous Darren McGavin. After four years on HBO, *The Hitchhiker* changed ownership and continued on the less-risqué USA

Network. At this juncture, all nudity and excessive violence was trimmed, making it a very different series from what had come before. After a few undistinguished years on USA (the same network which extended NBC's mid-80s remake of *Alfred Hitchcock Presents*), the *Hitchhiker* was canceled. Today it is remembered as a kind of bad joke by most genre enthusiasts: a variation on *The Twilight Zone* with a lot of celebrity T & A thrown in for good measure.

## HISTORY

Technically, *The Hitchhiker* predates the big anthology boom of the mid-1980s which is usually credited to Steven Spielberg's participation in *Amazing Stories*. Premiering in late 1983, it even came before the regular series run of Laurel's *Tales from the Darkside* (though not before the Halloween 1983 pilot "Trick or Treat"). *The Hitchhiker* is also notable for being one of the first, if not *the* first regular horror-oriented first-run series to premiere on a premium cable network, in this case HBO (Home Box Office.) This is a critical distinction, because the place that *The Hitchhiker* called home greatly influenced its artistic direction and bent. In the early '80s, for instance, cable television was only just beginning to be a challenge to the three major American networks for a share of a large audience. Most cable networks like WHO, SHO, and HBO competed with one another and the networks by broadcasting recent hit movies (this was also the era when VCRs were just becoming a common household item). Because these stations were on cable TV, they were able to show "R" rated or adult (over 17) rated movies uncut and unedited without a standards and practices department running roughshod over broadcasts. From that point, the next step was a no brainer: brand new cable series which could feature sex and violence on a regular basis without interference. Cinemax "after dark" showcased soft-porn films, so a soft-porn anthology on HBO was no stretch.

Imagine *Rod Serling's Night Gallery* or *The Outer Limits* with sexual content and extreme gore, and you have an idea of what this series was intended to be. Half-hour horror tropes, a mysterious on-screen narrator, and a sexual bent which simultaneously accented the fantastic and the horrific were all a part of *The Hitchhiker* puzzle. After three episodes in late 1983, *The Hitchhiker* rapidly became the most popular feature on the HBO cable network, and it returned with ten additional episodes in 1984 minus the original Hitchhiker, Nicholas Campbell, and with the curly-haired, intense-looking Page Fletcher as his replacement.

*The Hitchhiker* was a potent combination of sex, violence, and horror which depended primarily on the appeal of things such as name directors like Roger Vadim ("Dead Man's Curve"); Philip Noyce ("The Curse"); *Robocop* (1987), *Basic Instinct* (1992), and *Starship Troopers* (1997) director Paul Verhoeven ("Last Scene") as well as popular actors such as Klaus Kinski, Margot Kidder, Geraldine Page, Robert Vaughn, John Colicos, Stephen Collins, Karen Black, Steve Railsback, Michael Madsen, Kirstie Alley, Darren McGavin, Sandra Bernhard, Gary Busey, Willem Dafoe, Barry Bostwick, Tom Skerritt, John Shea, Fred Ward, James Remar, and Bill Paxton. More importantly, the show had visual appeal because it regularly showcased the impressive anatomical attributes of a variety of beautiful young women including Michele Scarabelli of *Alien Nation* (1989) in "Face to Face," Shannon Tweed in "Videodate," Jennifer Cooke of *V* (1985) in "Man's Best Friend," Susan Anspach in "Dead Man's Curve," *Flash Gordon's* (1980) Ornella Muti in "True Believer," Virginia Madsen in "Perfect Order," Helen Hunt in "Why Are You Here?" and Kelly Lynch in "Joker."

Because each episode of *The Hitchhiker* featured at least one topless scene and one sequence of simulated sex, the stories tended to feel secondary and rather insubstantial. The nudity and sex were obviously intended as the high point, with the final twist feeling like an obligatory moral lesson after

some good old fashioned sinning.

Despite its shortcomings, *The Hitchhiker* was immensely popular. Still, it was canceled following the 1987 season and almost 40 episodes. By then, people were getting their daily dose of sex and violence from movie rentals, as well as from network TV, which had loosened many restrictions so as to remain viable. Still, the story of *The Hitchhiker* was not over. Page Fletcher and his series returned to TV in 1989 on the same cable network which had resuscitated *Airwolf*, *Alfred Hitchcock Presents*, and *The Ray Bradbury Theater: USA*. Since USA regularly censors words such as “damn,” “God,” and “bastard” out of all of its broadcasts, it was pretty clear that *The Hitchhiker* could no longer trade on female pulchritude and simulated intercourse. At the same time, it was also obvious that the show would, because of budget cuts, no longer be top-of-the-line enough to feature such notable movie quality guest stars or directors. Instead, former TV stars such as Erin Gray (*Buck Rogers in the 25th Century* [1979-81], Stephanie Zimbalist (*Remington Steele*), Bruce Weitz (*Hill Street Blues*), Perry King (*Riptide*), Nancy McKeon (*The Facts of Life*), Ken Howard (*The White Shadow*), and Mary Frann (*Newhart*) populated the shows.

What finally emerged during the last 46 shows (all on USA) was a mediocre anthology with little or nothing to distinguish it from the USA version of *Alfred Hitchcock Presents*. Although episodes were shot in Toronto and even in Paris, *The Hitchhiker* ended its cable run in anonymity seven years after it was the toast of Hollywood, and an A-list gig.

In 1987, Lorimar Home Video released four volumes from *The Hitchhiker*'s HBO era, which came replete with all the nudity, cussing, and gore of the early days. Three episodes were included on each VHS tape, which described the series as “the cult hit of the year.” That may have been an exaggeration, but Hollywood Video and other retail stores still have copies of this soft-core, hard-gore anthology on their shelves. *The Hitchhiker* is now a staple of the Sci-Fi Channel as well, but the HBO shows have had the sexual content and extreme violence edited out so as to make room for more commercials.

### CRITICAL COMMENTARY

Despite the objections of the religious right, sex has been a valid subject for playwrights since the heyday of Greek drama. Whether the play be *Lysistrata* or *Oedipus*, human sexuality has remained a topic worthy of exploration because it is so important a part of our existence, psychology, and behavior. Today, we have humorous film essays about sexual mores courtesy of talented directors such as Woody Allen, Ed Burns, and Kevin Smith. Not surprisingly, horror can also walk hand-in-hand with sexual themes (as *Fatal Attraction* [1987] and *Basic Instinct* [1992] have so memorably illustrated). After all, the very decision to engage in sex has serious repercussions, and such repercussions are in many ways the essence of a good scare. Consider these questions: What if a sex partner becomes pregnant? What if one transmits a sexual disease? What if an illicit lover makes him/herself known to your unsuspecting spouse? What if that attractive stranger you pick up in a bar is actually a psycho killer? These are intriguing ideas because sex and danger are intertwined, and danger sometimes augments enjoyment of the act.

The point of this abstract discussion of sex is that it is not only acceptable (dramatically speaking) for an anthology to concern the “dark” side of human sexual relations, it would actually be interesting, informative, and even kind of fun to watch such a show. Sadly, *The Hitchhiker* botches the rare opportunity to cleverly incorporate issues of sex and attraction into its stories. What would have been

a series about human fears and dreads on this fascinating topic opts instead to be a leering gawk show. Nudity is always on display (in the most lovely female forms money can buy) but it is present (for the most part) simply to satiate some prurient interest. It is just eye candy when it could have (and should have) been material intrinsic to the storytelling process.

To wit: “Face to Face,” starring Robert Vaughn, is the story of an arrogant plastic surgeon whose addiction to drugs and bad living causes him to botch an important reconstructive surgery. He flees the country after destroying a human face and then learns about vanity firsthand when the victim (a Hollywood makeup expert) seduces him and in the process takes away *his* good looks. In essence, this is a morality play about ego and the “God Complex” of overpaid doctors. In other words, it is a fine outline by which to tell a horrific tale of sin, disfigurement, and vengeance. Yet also included in this brief, 30-minute play are two totally gratuitous examples of sex and nudity. In the first, an associate of Vaughn’s (Michelle Scarabelli) throws herself on him at their clinic. She is seen completely naked, lounging in his office after their off-screen bout of carnal behavior. After she shows “the goods” (i.e., her very attractive body), Scarabelli’s character is dispatched, not to be seen again, and her character plays no part in the resolution of the adventure.

The first problem to consider is that the inclusion of this character and this post-intercourse scene does not really reflect reality. Is it at all likely that a doctor (who spent a good decade of her life at medical school) would jeopardize everything and throw herself on a colleague in their *office* complex? Wouldn’t they at least rent a motel room, or go somewhere that wouldn’t interfere with their professional livelihoods? Yes, the danger of sex sometimes makes people go at it in public places, but that is not the mood of this scene. Instead, a character who serves no dramatic purpose shows up nude simply as a show-piece—a bit of titillation thrown into the mix so nobody turns the channel.

The second act of sex in “Face to Face” involves Sybil Danning and Robert Vaughn. She’s a famous movie star who has had “work done,” and she and Vaughn have sex together and snort cocaine at his place. This sets up the “hangover” effect of the next morning when Vaughn botches the surgery. The only problem is this: Why do viewers need to ogle Sybil Danning’s ass and breasts to get the message that Vaughn is debauched? He could have gotten drunk or done cocaine and *still* been wasted the following morning, so the sex scene isn’t at all crucial to the narrative. It’s just more of that eye candy. Fantasies are wonderful things, and a little nudity never hurt anybody, but sexual fantasies are better and far more rewarding when they seem plausible and possible. In “Face to Face” the audience sees sexual situations between unlikable characters who exist primarily to put out.

“Dead Man’s Curve” (directed by Roger Vadim) has very much the same sort of shortcomings. A famous writer (Susan Anspach) returns to her small town home for her 20-year class reunion, but ends up diddling a young stud named Lance. Well, Lance isn’t what he claims to be, and he is actually out for revenge against a woman he despises. Yet the two people go at it together, again and again. Besides featuring the immortal line of dialogue “you’d be on food stamps so fast, it’d make your dick twitch,” this episode is mostly an opportunity for close-ups of rear ends and breasts. Yes, those rear ends and breasts look terrific, but they would have been sexier if buttressed (no pun intended) by a solid story and characters made of something other than cardboard and clichés. Why would a man who has spent his adult life hating a woman turn around and screw her repeatedly? What is his psychological state that sex is part of his revenge? Perhaps if *The Hitchhiker* had answered these questions, it would have had an interesting show on its hands.

And so it went on *The Hitchhiker*. Jennifer Cooke did a gratuitous shower/disrobing scene in “Man’s

Best Friend” even though that story was ostensibly about a hellhound who murdered the enemies of her deranged husband. “Nightshift” was about a murderous old vampire (Darren McGavin) in a nursing home, but the writer found time to include a sex/topless scene between Margot Kidder and her crooked boyfriend. “Last Scene,” directed by Paul Verhoeven, concerned a first-time film director trying to get a decent performance out of a wooden, inexperienced blond actress, but the episode opened with an extended sex scene featuring dripping sweat, lots of nipples, and a bit of undulating. Yet this bit of simulated sex was just a scene for the “make-believe” movie of the tale.

In “The Curse,” Harry Hamlin is vexed by an African American witch for his bad habits as a negligent landlord. Of course, she has sex with Hamlin (after cryptically warning that the energy he’s “been putting out” is coming back at him). That’s right: friends and foes, strangers, adulterers, acquaintances—they *all* have sex together on this show. It’s obligatory, and that is what ultimately makes *The Hitchhiker* so boring for so much of the time. Sex is and should be a special, powerful, spontaneous thing, and *The Hitchhiker* reduced its electricity considerably by making sex a part of its formula (no matter what!) week after mind-numbing week.

To be fair, *The Hitchhiker* did succeed sometimes, when it chose to explore sex rather than merely exploit it. In “Videodate,” for instance, a womanizer named Rhodes (Gregg Henry) who ritually exploited innocent women and kept a bulletin board of his conquests is bested by a beautiful performance artist (Shannon Tweed) who knows his game. The subject here really was sex, and how every human being can be manipulated by a desire for it. Rhodes believed that he was the student of human nature, that he was the one who could push buttons on others, but in the end he discovered he was as much a slave to it as those he sought to conquer. It was not a particularly deep story, but at least “Videodate” was admirably kinky. It was rather satisfying to watch this womanizing guy get his comeuppance as Tweed disrobed him, tied him to a bed, and made “performance art” out of his last moments of life on this Earth.

“Hired Help” was another revenge story which succeeded mainly through its bizarre and daring imagery. In this *The Hitchhiker* entry, another exploiter of human beings, Karen Black, beds down a Mexican devil or “Diablo” and is ultimately exploited herself. There’s nothing new or interesting in the writing, but the centerpiece sex scene turns out to be bizarre, and even memorable. It is shot in profile, in silhouette. During the act of intercourse, the devilish man unexpectedly sheds his human form and sprouts butterfly-like wings and glowing green eyes. Suddenly, the scene goes ballistic as this devil brutally manhandles Black, slapping her around with a belt and contorting her compliant body in a vicious, pounding rhythm. What’s kinky about this sequence is that the hedonistic Black enjoys being treated this way. It is arousing in a freaky sense, and it plays on almost a *Rosemary’s Baby* level of paranoia and excitement. What if you had sex with Satan? What would it be like? “Hired Help” does what no network anthology could dare do—it shows you the answer to those questions. It visualizes it for you. Shakespeare it ain’t, but for the curious it’s different enough to keep one’s attention.

When *The Hitchhiker* remembered why sex could be so scary and exciting, its imagery and implications triumphed over the banal writing and trite plots. Stephen Collins (*Star Trek: The Motion Picture* [1979]) played a high school teacher who deflowered a young virgin student from his photography class in “And If We Dream.” The twist in the tale was that the girl was telepathic, and that rather than be cast aside by the married Collins, she trapped him in her dream world forever. Equally chilling was “True Believer,” in which Tom Skerritt (*Alien* [1979], *Spacecamp* [1985], *Picket*

*Fences* [1992–1996]) found himself making love to a ghostly siren in a haunted convent. This spectral lover first tantalized and then terrified him by taking on the form of his dead daughter. In these few stories, *The Hitchhiker* boldly shattered societal taboos and dug around in the terrain of hidden and even subconscious fantasies. More often than not, however, it was a series about vengeance, violence, and gratuitous sex.

Still, at least that mix was something different than what was usually offered on TV. When *The Hitchhiker* trekked over to USA, all such originality was lost. The sex was gone, the feature-film quality and production values were gone, and the stories became muddled exercises in confusion.

Indicative of these problems was “Fading Away,” a story in which a shadowy secret agent named Mitchell South (Nick Mancuso) seeks asylum from his superiors in a safe house/apartment/insane asylum. He talks cryptically about a man called “the Major,” is double-crossed by a woman who promises to help him, and encounters a crazy old loon (Helen Hughes) whose sole obsession is a ball of string. At the climax, South is incarcerated in the building and left there permanently as a raving lunatic. It is unclear as of the finale if he is: a) a secret agent who is captured and held by the government because of a mission failure, b) an inmate of the hospital who believes he is a secret agent but is in fact merely insane, or c) a one-time secret agent who long ago became an inmate but who now makes repeated escape attempts in which his doctor plays the part of “the Major.” Are his cohorts in the asylum former spies too, or just sick individuals? If they are inmates, how did one woman get out and meet him in a bar? If they are operatives, why are they incarcerated? Disturbingly, “Fading Away” never seems to make the choice of what it is really about and so emerges as thirty confusing minutes of hemming and hawing.

On USA, *The Hitchhiker* became a series obsessed with smoke-filled bars, bawdy come-ons that went nowhere, and loyalties/ betrayals between uninteresting shadow people. These shows are so bad they are actually difficult to sit through. *The Hitchhiker* is most interesting in its HBO incarnation. At least that version can be seen as a testimony to its context in the world and history of cable television, if nothing else. Sex and violence were highlighted ... because they *could* be highlighted, and one can do worse than to sit back and enjoy these human vices for thirty minutes. It’s not a bad show to visit in a frisky mood, but if you plan to watch more than a few episodes, you may feel the need to take a shower. Not to calm arousal, mind you, but to wash off the stink.

## CAST AND CREDITS

*Cast:* Nicholas Campbell (*The Hitchhiker*; 1983 Season); Page Fletcher (*The Hitchhiker*; 1984–1990).

*Credits:* Created by: Riff Markowitz, Lewis Chesler and Richard Rothstein. Produced by: Riff Markowitz, Lewis Chesler. Executive Producers: Lewis Chesler, David Perlmutter, Baudjemaa Dahmane, Jacques Methe. Executive Story Supervisor: Richard Rothstein. Co-producer: Jon Andersen. Production Supervisor: Steven Felder. Supervising Producers: Tab Baird, Wendy Grean. Creative Producer: Jeremy Lipp. Production Consultant: Jack Laird. Music: Michel Rubini, Jack Pracher. Casting: Hank McCann. Casting Director: Ben Rubin. Casting Director (Toronto): Rosina Bucci, Elite Productions. Executive in Charge of Business Affairs: Tab Baird. Story Editor: Gail Glaze. Director of Development: J. Paul Higgins. Directors of Photography (various episodes): Thomas Burstyn, Wendy Grean, Les Kimber, Norman Langley, Paul Vander Linden, Reginald H. Morris, Francois Protat, Richard Wincenty. Production Designer: Jocelyn Joly, Richard Wilcox. Editors (various episodes): Stan Cole, Luc Desmarais, Yves Langlois, George Roulston. First Assistant

*Director (various episodes):* Gordon Mark, Francois Moullin. *Second Assistant Director:* Frank Rusczyznski. *Location Manager:* Mary Guilfoyle. *Production Coordinator:* Penny Gibbs. *Script Supervisor:* Candice Field. *Camera Operators:* Mike Ferris, Tony Westman. *Sound Mixer:* Rick Patton. *Art Director:* David Fischer, Susan Longmire. *Set Decorator:* Elizabeth Wilcox. *Property Master:* Wayne McLaughlin. *Costume Designer:* Christopher Ryan. *Makeup Supervisor:* Phyllis Newman. *Hairstylist:* Gloria Jean Bronson. *Special Effects Coordinator:* Michael Clifford. *Production Controller:* James R. Westwell. *On-line editor:* Gordon Stoddard. *Colorist:* Ernie Moser. *Assistant Editor:* Scott Summersgill. *Post Production Supervisor:* Nicholas Rose. *Rerecording Mixers:* Terry Gordica, James Porteous. *Sound Editor:* Yanina Jezek. *Casting Director (Vancouver):* Lindsay Walker. *Casting Associate:* Beth Voiku. *Stunt Coordinator:* Bill Ferguson. *Lenses and Panaflex:* Panavision. *Electronic Film Editing:* The Magnetic North Corp. *Post Production Sound:* The Masters Workshop Corporation. *Post Production Supervisor:* W. Michael Beard. *Promotional Consideration provided by:* The Denman Hotel, Vancouver, CA. Markowitz/Chesler Productions.

## EPISODE GUIDE

### • *First Season (1983)*

**1. “Shattered Vows”** Written by Lewis Chesler; Directed by Ivan Nagy; airdate: November 23, 1983; *Guest Cast:* Bruce Greenwood (Jeff Boder); Alexander Stewart (Jack Winslow); Alesia Shirley (Pamela); Tom Heaton (Peter).

Even as he plans to marry a respectable rich girl, Jeff continues to carry on an illicit affair with another young woman. Murder, deceit, and two unusual statuettes soon play a part in Jeff’s love life.

**2. “When Morning Comes”** Written by Lewis Chesler; Directed by Ivan Nagy; airdate: November 30, 1983; *Guest Cast:* August Schellenberg (Bob); Pamela Bowman (Cathy); Tabitha Herrington (Sally Harris).

A man becomes romantically attached to a mysterious girl he found near his mountain retreat. Is she just a lost hiker, as she claims, or a murderous lunatic on the loose?

**3. “Split Decision”** Written by Lewis Chesler; Directed by Ivan Nagy; airdate: December 14, 1983; *Guest Cast:* Jackson Davies (Jake); Judy Landers (Frances); Audrey Landers (Priscilla).

Two beautiful twins who share and share alike discover they have to make an accommodation for Jake. He is a real estate agent selling their family home, and both twins have fallen in love ... or at least lust ... with him.

### • *Second Season (1984–1985)*

**4. “Lovesounds”** Written by Joseph Loeb III and Matthew Weisman; Directed by David Wickes; airdate: November 13, 1984; *Guest Cast:* Klaus Kinski (Kurt Hoffman); Belinda Bauer (Veronica); Steve Shellen.

A strange electronic stereo system is the instrument through which two people engaging in an illicit affair are tripped up by their own actions.

**5. “Remembering Melody”** Written by Alvin Sapinsley; From a story by George R.R. Martin;



Directed by Christopher Leitch; airdate: November 27, 1984; *Guest Cast*: David Dukes (Ted); Susan Blakely (Melody); Albert Watson (Jill).

A yuppie attorney who left behind his ideals in the 1960s for the promise of wealth and comfort is forced to remember his past when the beautiful Melody shows up for a visit. The only problem is that Melody, an old friend and lover who remembers his better days, has been dead for some time.

**6. “Face to Face”** Written by Robert J. Avrech; From a story by Richard Rothstein; Directed by David Wickes; airdate: December 4, 1984; *Guest Cast*: Robert Vaughn (Dr. Christopher Hamilton); Sonja Smits (Lena Russell); Robin Green (Tess); Arthur Corber (Dr. Gold); Michelle Scarabelli (Dr. Lindstrom); Sybil Danning (Gloria Lloyd).

A plastic surgeon with a God complex works on Ms. Lena Russell, a man who has had a sex change operation to become female, but who remains unattractive. Because he was on a bender of sex and cocaine the night before with movie star Gloria Lloyd, Dr. Hamilton botches the operation and then flees to Paris ... but his past catches up with him in the airport.

**7. “And If We Dream”** Written by Leona Barish; From a story by Richard Rothstein; Directed by Mai Zetterling; airdate: January 15, 1985; *Guest Cast*: Stephen Collins (Todd Fields); Roberta Weiss (Roseanne Lucas); Mitch Martin (Lynn Fields); Nicholas Kilbertus (Quinley); Brian Dooley (Catelya); Bronwen Mantel (Iris Lucas).

A high school photography teacher with ambitions to get back into professional photography becomes romantically involved with a sexy young student named Roseanne Lucas who has an unusual ability. She can call to the professor in his dreams, perpetuating their illicit relationship for eternity ... even if he is desperate for it all to end.

**8. “Petty Thieves”** Written by William Darrid; From a story by Richard Rothstein; Directed by Christopher Leitch; airdate: January 29, 1985; *Guest Cast*: Steve Railsback (Mickey); Maurie Laurin (Paula); John Colicos (Strega).

Crime boss Strega has always had a thing for Mickey’s beautiful wife, Paula. Realizing Mickey’s desperation, Strega makes the small-time con a deal that will grant the loser some respect, and Strega a shot at Paula.

**9. “Videodate”** Written and directed by Richard Rothstein; airdate: February 16, 1985; *Guest Cast*: Gregg Henry (Peter/Jack Rhodes); Shannon Tweed (Barbara/Monique); Linda Smith (Carole Bayers); Michael Rudder (Tommy); Steve Bienstock (Salesman #1); Andrew Johnston (Salesman #2); Pauline Little (Cashier).

Jack Rhodes signs up with a video dating service claiming he is looking for commitment, honesty, and mutual respect, but in fact he just wants to get laid and have a series of one-night stands. One day, Jack is contacted by the seductive Barbara, a beautiful performance artist who invites him to her place, ties him to the bed, and plays a deadly game called “blast off.”

**10. “A Time for Rifles”** Written by Stanford Whitmore; From a story by H.A. De Rosso; Directed by David Wickes; airdate: March 2, 1985; *Guest Cast*: Bo Hopkins, John Ireland, King Langford (Rae); Stephen McHattie (Joe).

Two Vietnam veterans who were once best friends and survived thick and thin together overseas, squabble over the affections of Lew's wife, Rae. This battle for Rae leads to violence, bloodshed, and the severing of a friendship.

**11. "Man at the Window"** Written by Michael Janover; Directed by Christopher Leitch; airdate: March 12, 1985; *Guest Cast*: Edward Albert (Arthur); Michael Madsen (John); Penelope Milford, Belinda Montgomery, Vlasta Vrana.

A washed-up writer, desperate for material, spies on an unusual love triangle and records it all for a promising screenplay. In need of a bang-up ending, the writer decides to stop observing and start participating, but it is a costly decision.

**12. "Hired Help"** Written by Stanford Whitmore; From a story by Gail Glaze; Directed by Mai Zetterling; airdate: March 26, 1985; *Guest Cast*: Karen Black (Kay Mason); Fernando Allende (Victor); Louis Di Bianco (Luis); Donnelly Rhodes (Herb Mason); Ali Giron (Maria).

A nasty woman who manages a sweat shop of Mexican immigrants is warned that the dark gods will make her pay for her cruel treatment of an injured worker. The next day, Kay picks up a mysterious man to work for her, and her housekeeper insist that he is actually a devil, a Diablo, out to steal her soul.

**13. "Murderous Feelings"** Written by Charles Israel; Directed by Mai Zetterling; airdate: April 9, 1985; *Guest Cast*: Franco Nero (Dr. Peter Milne); Rene Soutendijk (Sarah); Sonja Smits (Susan Carter); Cecil Linder (Dr. Fisher); John Novak (Stalker).

A psychiatrist resorts to murder to silence a patient he has had an inappropriate relationship with. Using his knowledge of the woman's nightmares and fears, he dresses up as a shadowy, imaginary killer he has heard her describe in the past, but an aggressive reporter bent on destroying him watches his every move.

• *Third Season (1985–1986)*

**14. "Nightshift"** Written by William Darrid; From a story by April Campbell and Bruce Jones; Directed by Phillip Noyce; airdate: October 15, 1985; *Guest Cast*: Margot Kidder (Jane Reynolds); Stephen McHattie (Johnny); Darren McGavin (the Old Man); Dorothy Davies (Mrs. Cranshaw); Enid Saunders (Mrs. MacDonald); Kenneth Gordon (Mr. Loring); Hagen Beggs (Detective); Stephen E. Miller (Worker #1).

Jane Reynolds, the night nurse at Golden Age Nursing Home, treats her geriatric wards with a cruel hand: stealing their jewelry and forcing them to watch frightening TV programs. One night, a strange old man is brought into the nursing home wearing a golden ring ... a ring he does not want to give up because it can provide, quite literally, his lifeblood.

**15. "Out of the Night"** Written by Marjorie David; From a story by Richard Rothstein; Directed by Brian Grant; airdate: October 29, 1985; *Guest Cast*: Kirstie Alley (The Amazing Angelica); Desiree Becker (Kathy); Ricky Paul Goldin, Elizabeth Ashley.

Pursued by the police, a murder suspect takes refuge in a remote inn. Once there, he encounters the Amazing Angelica, a beautiful illusionist who wants him to serve as her assistant.

**16. "The Killer"** Written by April Campbell and Bruce Jones; From a story by Richard Rothstein and Christopher Leitch; Directed by Carl Schenkel; airdate: November 12, 1985; *Guest Cast:* Jenny Seagroave (Meg); Patrick Houser (Jonathan); Lisa Raines Foster (Patty); Roger Alford (Mr. Kinderly); Margaret Martin, Rodney Gage.

A paralyzed young woman in a wheelchair is terrified to discover that she is in her grand home alone with the psycho who has just murdered her family and the domestic staff. Handicapped, but armed with a shotgun, the woman faces her would-be attacker.

**17. "W.G.O.D."** Written by Tom Baum; From a story by Richard Rothstein; Directed by Michael Hodges; airdate: November 26, 1985; *Guest Cast:* Gary Busey (Reverend Nolan Powers); Geraldine Page (Lynette Powers); Robert Ito (Mr. Sato); Brioni Farrell (Darlene); Ian Forsyth (Ross); Tony Lewis (Gerald).

An evangelical, pro-life radio host listens to confessions on the air, and one day hears from a young man who claims that judgment day is nearing. Is Jesus Christ coming back to Earth, or is it Nolan's dead brother ... a brother he killed?

**18. "Man's Best Friend"** Written by Nevin Schreiner; From a story by April Campbell and Bruce Jones; Directed by Phillip Noyce; airdate: December 10, 1985; *Guest Cast:* Michael O'Keefe (Richard Shephard); Jennifer Cooke (Eleanor Shephard); Joe Polis (Carl); Boyd Norman (Randi); Margot Pinvidic (Dr. Hazlitt).

Richard comes home to find his wife throwing his suitcases down the staircase and demanding his immediate departure. Richard goes to stay at his friend Carl's house, and he meets up with a stray dog there ... a dog with the taste for the blood of his enemies.

**19. "Ghostwriter"** Written by Thomas Baum; Directed by Carl Schenkel; airdate: January 7, 1986; *Guest Cast:* Barry Bostwick (Tony Lynch); Dayle Haddon (Debbie Hunt); M. Emmet Walsh (Sgt. Underhill); Madelaine Sherwood (Vivian Zellerdeck); Willem Dafoe (Jeffrey Hunt); Anthony Holland (Professor Pierce).

Author Jeffrey Hunt stages his own death in hopes that his passing will revive his floundering writing career and boost royalties. Upon his "return from the dead," however, he learns that his wife Debbie and his agent Tony are having a romantic affair.

**20. "O.D. Feelin'"** Written by Richard Rothstein and Christopher Leitch; Directed by Richard Rothstein; airdate: January 28, 1986; *Guest Cast:* Sandra Bernhard (The Rat); Gene Simmons (Mr. Big); Michel Des Barres (Wiseman).

A testament to the destructive power of drugs: a bag of cocaine changes hands several times, bringing misery and death to each of those who briefly possess it.

**21. "Dead Man's Curve"** Written by John Harrison; From a story by Christopher Leitch; Directed by Roger Vadim; airdate: February 11, 1986; *Guest Cast:* Susan Anspach (Claudia Reynolds); Michael Schoeffling (Lance Hollerfield); Michael Ironside (Lee); Deanne Henry (Mavis); David Berner (TV Interviewer).

Claudia Reynolds, author of the steamy bestseller *Gomorrah*, returns to her hometown for the reunion of the class of '65. She has a torrid tryst with a young man named Lance, but it turns out he's an obsessed man with some history in common with her.

**22. "The Curse"** Written by Thomas Baum; From a story by Richard Rothstein and Christopher Leitch; Directed by Phillip Noyce; airdate: February 25, 1986; *Guest Cast*: Harry Hamlin (Jerry Macklin); Deborah Lacey (Tanya); Beah Richards (Serita); Peter Yunker (Mike); Arnold Johnson (Nestor); Daryl Hays (Doctor); Janet Hodgkinson (Nurse); Laurie O'Byrne (Woman).

A wealthy, handsome slumlord leaves an extravagant party in his fancy apartment to visit one of his many crumbling tenement properties. He is invited into an apartment by an old black woman with a snake, and he gives his word to fix the place up, even if it costs him the down payment on his beach house. When he backs out of the deal, the slumlord awakes in blood one morning to find a snake tattoo crawling up his body.

**23. "True Believer"** written by William Kelly; Directed by Carl Schenkel; airdate: March 11, 1986; *Guest Cast*: Tom Skerritt (Frank Sheen); Ornella Muti (Sister Therese); Walter Learning (Father Dowling).

Investigating the apparent suicide of a priest, a hard-boiled detective goes inside a haunted convent. Inside, he encounters a demonic infestation and a woman ... a fallen nun named Sister Therese ... who can also take the form of his ex-wife and his recently deceased teenage daughter.

**24. "Last Scene"** Written by Robert J. Avrech; From a story by Richard Rothstein; directed by Paul Verhoeven; airdate: March 25, 1986; *Guest Cast*: Peter Coyote (Alex Nolan); LaGena Hart (Leda Biddell); Tom Heaton (Paul); Garwin Sanford (Duncan).

A first-time actor-turned-director is pressured to make his production, a stalker movie, a success. Everything depends on the last scene and the talents of an inexperienced actress, so the director resorts to some extraordinary measures to provoke the emotions he is seeking.

**25. "Man of Her Dreams"** Written by Gary Ross; From a story by April Campbell and Bruce Jones; Directed by Phillip Noyce; airdate: April 8, 1986; *Guest Cast*: Marilyn Hassett (Jill McGinnis); Anthony F. Hamilton (Jim); Dennis Kelly (Markey).

A woman who dreams perpetually of Mr. Right takes a wrong turn when she becomes involved with murder, and a prophecy of death.

**26. "One Last Prayer"** Written by Leora Barish and Henry Bean; From a story by April Campbell and Bruce Jones; Directed by Brian Grant; airdate: April 22, 1986; *Guest Cast*: Lisa Blount (Miranda); John Cavell (Sean); Keith Gordy (Robbie); William Samples (Scott).

A rock star on the verge of making it big records a hit single called "One Last Prayer." Her future may be bright, but the musician has a problem: her public image, her doppelganger, seems to be taking over her life in more ways than one.

• *Fourth Season (1987)*

**27. "Perfect Order"** Written by Marjorie David; Directed by Daniel Vigne; airdate: February 17,

1987; *Guest Cast*: Virginia Madsen (Christina); Steve Inwood (Simon); James Shiget (Nishi).

A beautiful model named Christina finds herself being attracted to a photographer who shoots images of extreme violence. She must decide what price she is willing to pay for her desires.

**28. “Minuteman”** Written by Thomas Baum; Directed by Chris Thomson; airdate: February 24, 1987; *Guest Cast*: John Shea (Jeremy); Alexandra Paul (Julie); Dean Hallow (G.R.); Nancy Isaak (Cheryl Ann).

A couple on a cross-country trip to their new home encounter two bikers on the road. The couple experiences a strange sense of déjà vu.

**29. “Dead Heat”** Written by William Rontog and Maurice Noel; Directed by Kees Van Oostrum; airdate: March 3, 1987; *Guest Cast*: Fred Ward (Luther Redman); Denise Galik (Ariel); Scott McGinnis (Cal).

A crazy sculptor is having difficulties with his lover and so contemplates a new masterpiece: an artful, but deadly, rendering of the eternal love triangle.

**30. “Why Are You Here?”** Written by Christopher Leitch and L.M. Kit Carson; From a story by Christopher Leitch; Directed by Chris Thomson; airdate: March 10, 1987; *Guest Cast*: Brad Davis (Jerry); Helen Hunt, Tim Holland, Mitchell Anderson.

The host of “Why Are You Here?,” a TV magazine, is desperately in need of a new angle to reverse the sliding ratings. What he comes up with as a rescue is terrifying: a bizarre custom in which the dying words of people are “collected.”

**31. “Homebodies”** Written by Christopher Leitch; From a story by Richard Rothstein and Christopher Leitch; Directed by Carl Schenkel; airdate: March 17, 1987; *Guest Cast*: Christopher Collett (Jimmy); Jim McMullin (Bill); Mellis Brennan (Denise); James Remar (Ron).

A convenience store heist ends with murder, and the perpetrators, two young men, flee the scene. Their next crime, a break-in, goes much worse.

**32. “Doctor’s Orders”** Written by Thomas Baum; Directed by Reynaldo Villalobos; airdate: March 24, 1987; *Guest Cast*: Paul LeMat (Jake); Shannon Tweed (Dr. Rita); Clayton Rohner (Harry); Sandy Tucker (Brenda).

A hypocritical small-town mayor wants to shut down sex therapist Dr. Ruth ... er ... Dr. Rita, but learns a lesson in humility from his wife. Worse, an embarrassment from long ago rears its ugly head.

**33. “The Legendary Billy B”** Written by L.M. Kit Carson; From a story by Marjorie David; Directed by Chris Thomson; airdate: March 31, 1987; *Guest Cast*: Kirstie Alley (Jane); Brad Dourif (Billy); Andy Summers, John Curtis, Suzi Davis.

A reporter for a sleazy tabloid newspaper has no problem destroying the reputations and lives of those she investigates. Her latest mission: to prove that a rock’n’roll legend didn’t really die twenty years ago.

**34. "In the Name of Love"** Written by Jeremy Lipp; From a story by Richard Rothstein, Christopher Leitch and Jeremy Lipp; Directed by John Laing; airdate: April 7, 1987; *Guest Cast:* Greg Evigan (Johnny); Lucy Gutteridge (Jackie); Susan Tyrell (Doris), Stephen E. Miller, Hagan Beggs.

A female assassin finishes her latest job (offing a major underworld drug figure) and then goes on vacation. She soon falls in love, unaware that her new lover may also be her next target.

**35. "Made for Each Other"** Written and directed by Thomas Baum; airdate: April 14, 1987; *Guest Cast:* Bud Cort (Wax); Bill Baxton (Trout); Jonelle Allen (Sunny).

Two murderers of vastly different stripes consolidate their efforts to do no good. They capture a beautiful prostitute and begin to torture her, but she is no easy mark.

**36. "Joker"** Written by William Gray and Robert Reneau; From a story by William Gray and James Padrino; Directed by Colin Bucksey; airdate: April 21, 1987; *Guest Cast:* Timothy Bottoms (Peter); Kelly Lynch (Teresa/Melissa).

A man teetering on the verge of sanity is incarcerated at a mental institution. Convinced that another inmate is his ex-wife, he begins to drive her crazy.

**37. "Best Shot"** Written by John Harrison; Directed by John Laing; airdate: April 28, 1987; *Guest Cast:* Ken Olin (Steve); Parker Stevenson (Brett); Michelle Moffett (Lori Ann); Brion James (Lionel).

Two attorneys on a vacation accidentally murder a hitchhiker on the road. They cover up his murder, but soon encounter the dead man's less-than-happy friends.

**38. "Secret Ingredient"** Written by Gail Glaze; directed by Colin Bucksey; airdate: May 5, 1987; *Guest Cast:* Dean Paul Martin (Chris Taylor); Candy Clark (Cheryl); Dana Wheeler-Nicholson (Belinda); Tamara Mark (Elizabeth).

Chris Taylor knows how to schmooze: he makes money, and he makes it hand-over-fist. His aggressive techniques, though successful in the short run, have a habit of turning employees and clients into bitter enemies.

**39. "Cabin Fever"** Written by April Campbell, Bruce Jones and Jon Boorstin; From a story by April Campbell, Bruce Jones and David Latt; Directed by Clyde Monroe; airdate: May 12, 1987; *Guest Cast:* Michael Woods (Rick); Jerry Orbach (Cameron); Season Hubley (Miranda); Colleen Winton, Fred Henderson.

Another story of marital infidelity, revenge, and murder as a man who is hired as a cabin boy on a yacht seeks to gain the money of his married employers.

• *Fifth Season (1989)*

**40. "The Martyr"** Written by Jeremy Lipp; Directed by Phillip Noyce; airdate: April 22, 1989; *Guest Cast:* Meg Foster, Erick Deshors.

A murder case is not as simple as it seems for a woman whose husband was the victim, and the so-called perpetrator.

**41. "In Living Color"** Written by Claude Michel Rome; Directed by John Laing; airdate: April 29, 1989; *Guest Cast:* Ray Sharkey, Denise Vireux.

A photographer more concerned with making money than saving lives snaps pictures as a death occurs before his very eyes.

**42. "Dark Wishes"** Written by Marie-Luce David and Jean-Vincent Fournier; Directed by John Laing; airdate: July 1, 1989; *Guest Cast:* Tammy Lauren, Consuelo de Havilland.

A nurse who has fallen in love with the husband of the woman under her care dabbles in the occult to make things go her way.

**43. "Garter Belt"** Written by Oliver Mergault; Directed by Roger Andrieux; airdate: July 7, 1989; *Guest Cast:* Robert Carradine, Catriona MacColl.

Another tale of blackmail and deceit set in Paris.

**44. "Shadow Puppets"** Written by Lawrence G. DiTillio; From a story by Guy Schulman and Monica Parker; Directed by Roger Andrieux; airdate: July 8, 1989; *Guest Cast:* Brian Kerwin, Miria Cyr.

A mental-health specialist meets a new patient with a history of problems and finds both the patient and the problems strangely compelling.

**45. "Renaissance"** Written by Charles Grant Craig and Jeremy Lipp; From a story by Charles Grant Craig; Directed by Bruno Gantillon; airdate: July 14, 1989; *Guest Cast:* David Paul, Jean Pierre Stewart.

An American in Paris finds himself on the hook as blackmailers attempt to frame him for murder.

**46. "The Miracle of Alice Ames"** Written by Naomi Janzen; From a story by Jeremy Lipp; Directed by Bruno Gantillon; airdate: July 15, 1989; *Guest Cast:* Joe Pantoliano, Coraly Zahonero.

A young woman searching for the meaning of life happens upon a dangerous cult and its charismatic leader. Unbeknownst to the woman at first, she will play an important role in the future.

**47. "Code Liz"** Written by Jean Streff; Directed by Bruno Gantillon; airdate: July 21, 1989; *Guest Cast:* Marc Singer, Katrine Boorman, Georges Fricker.

A man unhappy in his marriage resorts to a computer fantasyland. To his surprise, a perfect fantasy woman is also present there to beckon and advise him.

**48. "Her Finest Hour"** Written by Sparkey Green and Jillian Palethorpe; From a story by Christopher Fowler; Directed by Aline Issermann; airdate: July 22, 1989; *Guest Cast:* Lisa Hartman, Hugette Faget.

Con artists use deceit as their weapon to trick an old spinster out of her fortune.

**49. "Together Forever"** Written by Guy Schulman and Monica Parker; Directed by Aline Issermann; airdate: July 28, 1989; *Guest Cast:* Erin Gray.

Hell hath no fury like a woman scorned, and one woman with the seed of jealousy inside her becomes increasingly convinced that her husband is having an illicit affair behind her back.

**50. “Phantom Zone”** Written by Robert Goethals; From a story by Jeremy Lipp; Directed by George Mihalka; airdate: August 4, 1989; *Guest Cast:* Jason Gedrick, Ann Romand, Karen Tungay.

A man hoping to marry learns that the past never goes away when a family secret threatens to be revealed.

**51. “Spinning Wheel”** Written by Naomi Janzen; From a story by Jeremy Lipp; Directed by George Mihalka; airdate: August 5, 1989; *Guest Cast:* Patti D’Arbanville, Peter Hudson, Este Ben, Gerard Touratier, Genevieve Omin.

A hatred-spewing performance artist reaches a plateau of terror where dreams, reality, and art seem interchangeable.

**52. “Square Deal”** Written by Stephanie Palay; From a story by Francois Raoul-Duval and Stephanie Palay; Directed by Bruno Gantillon; airdate: August 11, 1989; *Guest Cast:* Michael Ontkean, Daniel Briquet.

Art theft and forgery lead to ruin for a man hoping to make a quick buck.

**53. “Part of Me”** Written by Jeremy Lipp; Directed by Bruno Gantillon; airdate: August 12, 1989; *Guest Cast:* Jeremy Clyde (Arnold); Elisabeth Vitali, Phillippe Loffredo.

A desperate, bankrupt man is coerced into selling his organs for profit.

**54. “Fashion Exchange”** Written by William Gray; Directed by John Laing; airdate: August 18, 1989; *Guest Cast:* Joe Dallesandro, Anny Mirande, Patrick Floersheim, Carol Miles.

A model who has been terminated from her job resorts to the occult to wreak vengeance on her former employer.

**55. “Hootch”** Written by Lawrence G. DiTillio; From a story by Gail Glaze; Directed by Leon Marr; airdate: September 16, 1989; *Guest Cast:* Stephanie Zimbalist (Heather); Joseph Ziegler (David); Pau Rutledge, John Boylan.

A woman and her husband want to sell the family house. Unfortunately, an unstable Vietnam veteran, the woman’s brother, also lives there and is not ready to leave.

**56. “Coach”** Written by Benjamin Taylor; From a story by Jeremy Lipp; Directed by Eric Till; airdate: September 30, 1989; *Guest Cast:* Charles Haid (Coach); Jonathan Grombie (Kenny); Nadia Capone (Chloe).

A track-and-field coach bullies his son and team member because he is secretly afraid that the boy will break a record he set a quarter century ago. The boy befriends a teenage girl and she seeks to help him do just that.

**57. “The Verdict”** Written by Lindsay Maracotta; From a story by Gail Glaze; Directed by Randy



Bradshaw; airdate: November 4, 1989; *Guest Cast*: Polly Draper, Bruce Ramsey, Bruce McFee.

“Absolute power corrupts absolutely” is the lesson of the day for an ambitious prosecutor who puts her own career ahead of the letter of the law.

**58. “Hit and Run”** Written by Naomi Janzen; From a story by Jeremy Lipp; Directed by Randy Bradshaw; airdate: November 10, 1989; *Guest Cast*: Bruce Weitz (Ray); Norma Dell’Agnese; Sabrina Boudot.

A man flees his wife and family with his girlfriend, but in his hurry mows down a pedestrian. He soon pays the price for leaving the boy for dead.

**59. “Studio 3X”** Written by Jeremy Lipp; Directed by Richard Bugajski; airdate: November 11, 1989; *Guest Cast*: Perry King (Doug); Bob Zidel (Ed); Fay Cohen.

A newsreporter who has made a career out of sensational stories, investigates Studio 3X as part of his exposé on the world of pornography. He soon finds, however, that his encounter with this world has affected him deeply.

**60. “Striptease”** Written by Jeremy Lipp; Directed by Gerard Ciccoritti; airdate: November 17, 1989; *Guest Cast*: John Glover, Jill Hennessey, Brigit Wilson.

A loud-mouthed, unforgiving man sees a chance at happiness but is foiled by his own errant behavior.

**61. “The Cruellest Cut”** Written by Rebecca Taylor; From a story by Gail Glaze; Directed by Michael Robison; airdate: November 18, 1989; *Guest Cast*: Melody Anderson (Sterling); David Elliott (Jason).

A prostitute and a john make what appears to be a meaningful connection. But things are not as they seem: a deranged hooker who is killing her clients is on the loose, and the man’s motivations may not be as honorable as he has led his new friend to believe.

**62. “Dying Generation”** Written by Naomi Janzen; From a story by Jeremy Lipp; Directed by Timothy Bond; airdate: November 24, 1989; *Guest Cast*: Roberta Maxwell (Mary Beth); Greg Spottiswood (Adam), Cyndy Preston (Stephanie).

A group of youngsters tempt fate when they visit a fortune-teller who warns that their future is grim.

**63. “My Enemy”** Written by Jeremy Lipp; Directed by Rene Bonniere; airdate: November 25, 1989; *Guest Cast*: Joan Severance, Ron Lea.

An actress who wants out of the rat race tries an unusual tack, and enters a contest to imitate herself. But is imitation the sincerest form of flattery, or is something else going on here?

**64. “Power Play”** Written by Dawn Ritchie; Directed by George Ciccoritti; airdate: December 9, 1989; *Guest Cast*: Chris Makepeace, Samantha Follows, Christopher Bondy.

A brown-nosing Hollywood wanna-be finds he’s stuck his nose in the wrong place when he tries to make good with a prominent producer and his family.

**65. “Pawns”** Written by Gerry Davis and Alison Bingham; From a story by Jeremy Lipp; Directed by Leon Marr; airdate: December 16, 1989; *Guest Cast:* David McIlwraith (Eddie); Jill Hennessy (Elizabeth); Michael Copeman, Carolyn Dunn, Winston Carroll.

A down-on-his-luck musician who was once a big star loses everything in one day and is forced to pawn his guitar. While doing so, he meets an unusual woman who suggests robbing the pawnbroker’s store.

• *Sixth Season (1990–91)*

**66. “Fading Away”** Written by Lawrence G. DiTillio; From a story by Gail Glaze; Directed by Gerard Ciccoritti; airdate: September 21, 1990; *Guest Cast:* Nick Mancuso (Mitchell South); Helen Hughes (String Lady); Angelo Rizacos (Freak); Brenda Bazinet (Mary); Michael Tait (Major); Conrad Coates (Frank).

A spy hoping to hide out and remain inconspicuous meets a woman in a bar who says she can help him with his problem, if he helps her with hers. She takes him to a bizarre apartment, which he mistakes for a “shop safehouse,” and soon comes to believe that he is being set up by a superior known as “the Major.”

**67. “Tough Guys Don’t Whine”** Written by Bradley R. Swirnoff; From a story by Gail Glaze; Directed by Jorge Montesi; airdate: September 28, 1990; *Guest Cast:* Alan Thicke (Mickey); Frank Pellegrino (Bowie); Krista Bridges, Joseph Griffon, Larry MacLean, Heidi Von Palleske.

A macho, hotshot director thinks he knows just the thing to spice up his latest action flick: real violence, courtesy of a real street gang. The misguided director sets out to recruit some real-life gang members, but ends the day wishing he hadn’t come up with this unusual high-concept.

**68. “Riding the Nightmare”** Written by Naomi Janzen; From a story by Lisa Tuttle; Directed by Christian Duquay; airdate: October 5, 1990; *Guest Cast:* Lauren Hutton (Tess); Garwin Sanford (Gordon); Victoria Snow (Jude); Rachel Blanchard, Peter Langley.

A woman who is having an affair with her sister’s husband begins to experience troubling nightmares. As life becomes more complicated, so do the nightmares become more real.

**69. “Strate Shooter”** Written by Naomi Janzen; From a story by Lawrence H. Levy; Directed by Mark Rezyka; airdate: October 12, 1990; *Guest Cast:* Chris Rydell (Johnny); Andrea Roth, Matt Cooke (Strate); Chandra West.

A wealthy juvenile who has turned to a life of crime relieves his boredom by watching a TV show about a womanizing conman. The viewer takes this character as a role model, and begins to repeat the TV character’s moves.

**70. “Hard Rhyme”** Written by Michael J. Murray III and Jeremy Lipp; From a story by David Nevins; Directed by Leon Marr; airdate: October 19, 1990; *Guest Cast:* Robert Foxworth (Lee); Heidi Von Palleske, Charmion King, Silvio Oliviero.

A writer in need of a contract plagiarizes the work of a murderous inmate. The ill-gotten manuscript becomes a best seller, but the so-called writer finds himself regretting his decision to appropriate the

life's work of another man.

**71. "Toxic Shock"** Written by Jeremy Lipp; Directed by Gerard Ciccoritti; airdate: October 26, 1990; *Guest Cast:* Zach Galligan (Dick); Kevin Hicks (Bobby); Tracey Cook (Sally); John Stoneham.

A worker dumping toxic waste illegally on another man's property is splashed with the dangerous material during a violent showdown. The man starts to become sick from the exposure, and susceptible to hallucinations.

**72. "New Dawn"** Written by Max Bloom and Jeremy Lipp; From a story by Jeremy Lipp; Directed by Mitch Cabourie; airdate: November 2, 1990; *Guest Cast:* Nancy McKeon (Dawn); Barclay Hope, Lori Hallier, Jill Frappier, Victor Ertmanis.

A lawyer turned artist is surrounded by murder and mayhem at his first exhibit. His wife, who has voiced objections to his career shift, wonders if she could be the next victim.

**73. "A Function of Control"** written by M.C. Varley and Bradley R. Swirnoff; Directed by Leon Marr; airdate: November 9, 1990; *Guest Cast:* Jennifer Dale (Laura), Nadia Capone, Kaya McGregor.

Laura was once almost married to her boss. Now he is married to another woman, and Laura's romantic feelings play a part in multiple murders.

**74. "Trust Me"** Written by Edward Redlich; Directed by Tab Baird; airdate: November 16, 1990; *Guest Cast:* Lorenzo Lamas (Tom Astor); Lawrence Bayne (Ted), Carolyn Dunn (Michelle).

A handsome stud of a womanizer is waylaid from his current scam, inheriting the wealth of an older woman, by an equally ruthless female con artist. The wicked woman blackmails him into helping her acquire her mother's jewelry.

**75. "Windows"** Written by Elizabeth Baxter; Directed by Rene Manzor; airdate: November 23, 1990; *Guest Cast:* David Marshall Grant (Jake); Annabelle Mouladji, Claude Jade, Denys Fouqueray.

A frustrated painter gains inspiration from the beating he witnesses inside an apartment across the way, with one exception: his painting depicts a man murdering his wife, not merely hitting her. Life imitates art, and soon the painter realizes he has a most unusual gift.

**76. "Working Girl"** Written by Lawrence G. DiTillio; Directed by Miguel Courtois; airdate: November 30, 1990; *Guest Cast:* Peggy Lipton (Helen); Marine Delterme.

A woman secretly trails her cheating husband to his rendezvous with a prostitute. The woman murders her husband, then joins forces with the wily hooker to conceal the crime.

**77. "White Slaves"** Written by Naomi Janzen and Jeremy Lipp; From a story by Jeremy Lipp; Directed by Robin Davis; airdate: December 7, 1990; *Guest Cast:* C. Thomas Howell (Gerald); Gerard Watkins (Eric); Mapi Galan, Van Epstein.

Two college students with an eye for trouble kidnap an innocent girl. Soon, the two boys are fighting, and the girl is in danger.

**78. “Tourist Trap”** Written by Martin Brossollet; From a story by Martin Brossollet and Elizabeth Baxter; Directed by Frank Apprederis; airdate: December 14, 1990; *Guest Cast*: Robby Benson (Bart); Hodan Siad.

A French con artist meets his match in a female mark who is on the lam. A series of double crosses ensue with the ultimate goal being possession of some stolen jewels.

**79. “Homecoming”** Written by Jean-Vincent Fournier; Directed by Bruno Gantillon; airdate: January 11, 1991; *Guest Cast*: Ken Howard (Dubois); Lara Favalia (Jean); Jean Pierre Stewart, Jean Descanville, Valerie LaGrange, Christian Van Acker.

A hatred-fostering neo-Nazi living in France begins to fear a young follower. It seems the young man looks strangely familiar.

**80. “Living a Lie”** Written by Elizabeth Baxter; Directed by Bruno Gantillon; airdate: January 18, 1991; *Guest Cast*: Scott Valentine (Joe); Ingrid Held, Bradley Cole, Yves Collignon.

A man employed as a waiter has a clever little scheme going on the side: he steals credit cards from the clientele and then proceeds to rack up expenses. This creative but unlawful idea backfires when the waiter makes use of a dead man’s wallet.

**81. “Made in Paris”** Written by Etienne Strudel; From a story by Martin Brossollet and Elizabeth Baxter; Directed by Rene Manzor; airdate: January 25, 1991; *Guest Cast*: Terence Knox (Leon); Yumi Fulimoro, Cecile Paoli.

A harsh taskmaster refuses to let one of his illegal Asian immigrants leave the sweat shop when injured. He later pays the price for his cruelty when a curse is visited upon him.

*Note*: This episode is a nonsexual, distaff retelling of “Hired Help,” *The Hitchhiker* episode #12.

**82. “A Whole New You”** Written by Naomi Janzen; From a story by Gail Glaze; Directed by Patricia Mazuy; airdate: February 1, 1991; *Guest Cast*: Elliott Gould (Augie Benson); Oliver Roubourdin (Dennis); Judith Burnett (Dr. Renaud).

A notorious criminal witness demands a new “identity” in exchange for his testimony in a pending federal court case. His demands are met ... albeit not quite in the way he envisioned.

**83. “Offspring”** Written by Jeremy Lipp; Directed by Robin Davis; airdate: February 8, 1991; *Guest Cast*: Louise Fletcher, Sebastian Rocher, Laura Favali.

As Norman Bates once said, a boy’s best friend is his mother. The young man in this story learns the same lesson, and also resorts to murder when his overbearing mother takes delight in destroying all his relationships with the opposite sex.

**84. “Secrets”** Written by Naomi Janzen; From a story by Elizabeth Baxter; Directed by Jacques Richard; airdate: February 15, 1991; *Guest Cast*: Mary Frann (Veronica); Daniel Faraldo (Roger); Michel Voletti.

A woman and her lover return home to claim the insurance money on her long-missing husband, now

presumed dead. Their petition for the money is considered suspicious, but worse than that, the long-lost husband shows up to ask for a piece of the financial pie.

**85. "New Blood"** Written by Jean-Vincent Fournier; From a story by Elizabeth Baxter; Directed by Joel Fargas; airdate: February 22, 1991; *Guest Cast:* Rae Dawn Chong (Lisa); Didie Sauvegrain (Varsi); Joanna Palvis (Consuela); Jerry DiGiacomo (Thierry).

An aspiring actress with little or no talent messes up another audition. The director of the show, however, sees something he likes in her and makes her an interesting offer.

## *Tales from the Darkside* (1984-1988)

### CRITICAL RECEPTION

“Stylish, if rather low-budget anthology ... resembled *The Twilight Zone*, but ... it never aired stories of a whimsical/fantasy nature. Watching it regularly could become a depressing experience.”—Tim Brooks and Earl Marsh, *The Complete Directory to Prime Time Network TV Shows* (1946–Present), Ballantine Books, 1984.

“On the negative side, the production values were rather low.... There were also some problems in terms of the stories themselves—the weekly contact with ‘The Other World’ was often contrived and left unexplained by a nonsensical punch-line.... Still the quirky, low-budget quality of the series had its own appeal, and there were enough genuinely good episodes to keep the audience satisfied.”—Paul Gagne, *The Zombies that Ate Pittsburgh: The Films of George Romero*, Dodd, Mead & Company, 1987.

“the first-run episodes of *Tales from the Darkside* ... showed a varying degree of quality, usually dependent upon the episode’s writer and/or director. The series has featured many popular actors ... Tom Savini even got into the directing act, along with another wonderfully beastly creation, for ‘In the Closet.’”—Robert Greenberger, Chris Henderson, Carr D’Angelo, *Starlog* #96: “Science Fiction Media 1984-85, page 34.

“An interesting, well-paced horror-thriller anthology ... with a bit of macabre humor thrown in for good measure ... pleasantly entertaining and occasionally downright scary.”—William Anchors, *Epilog* #9: “*Tales from the Darkside*,” 1991, page 15.

### FORMAT

As people go about their lives day-to-day, most are blissfully ignorant that alongside the universe of the normal exists another world with very different rules and inhabitants. Call it a darkside. Like *The Twilight Zone*, this darkside netherworld often provides for a sort of universal justice in which the bad and guilty are punished and the good and victimized are rewarded, or at the very least, vindicated.

Each segment of this low-budget, 30-minute horror anthology commences with a view of the normal world. The camera watches blissfully as rolling clouds go by in the sky, and then captures tranquil settings such as a covered red bridge, a babbling brook, an idyllic farm, and a wooded glade. As these seemingly pastoral images pass by our eyes, a deep-voiced narrator (Paul Sparer) suddenly warns that man lives in the “sunlit world of what he believes to be reality,” and that there is also a darkside. As this admonition is cast, the picture suddenly becomes “negative,” as if an evil door has been flipped open, and the title card *Tales from the Darkside* pops up in a bloody red, EC comiclike scrawl.

At the end of each *Tales from the Darkside* story, the creepy narrator’s voice returns briefly and tenders the notion that the audience should try to “enjoy the sunlight” until the next series installment.

A horror anthology in the mode of *Rod Serling’s Night Gallery*, the syndicated hit *Tales from the*

*Darkside* is an excursion into outright horror, and sometimes broad, slapstick comedy. The series is packed with well-known actors, but the writing is generally variable, despite the presence of such talents as George Romero, Stephen King, and Clive Barker. One week, this show is astonishingly good, and the next it can be but barely watchable. These summits and pitfalls may be a result of an excessively low-budget as well as weak writing, but regardless, *Tales from the Darkside* was an unqualified success in its syndicated first run in the mid-80s, as local stations were hungering for a new program executed with at least a modicum of wit and style.

## HISTORY

*Tales from the Darkside* is an interesting reminder that a series need not be associated with a big studio, a big budget, or a major network to succeed on television. This low-budget anthology thrived for four seasons, primarily because it filled a need and demand not satisfied by the big budget network failures such as *Amazing Stories* (1985): the need for good, solid storytelling. This is not to say that *Tales from the Darkside* is a classic, or even that it is consistently good, only that it is amusing and a bit inspiring to witness a low-budget, high-concept, homegrown product kick the tar out of the entertainment equivalent of “city hall.”

*Tales from the Darkside* has its roots with Laurel TV, Inc., and executive producers Richard Rubinstein, Jerry Golod, and George Romero. Of those three names, only one is instantly recognizable to the horror film fanatic, and that of course is George Romero's. This talented director from Pittsburgh has been responsible for many of the most frightening and influential pictures in the genre, including his “Living Dead” troika (*Night of the Living Dead* [1968], *Dawn of the Dead* [1979], *Day of the Dead* [1985]), and his unusual take on the modern vampire, *Martin* (1976). In 1982, George Romero tackled another project, a successful horror anthology film entitled *Creepshow* which boasted an original screenplay by the king of horror fiction, Stephen King. *Creepshow*, starring Hal Holbrook, Adrienne Barbeau, Leslie Nielsen, Ted Danson, and E.G. Marshall, was a critical and box office success, and the kernel which grew into TV's *Tales from the Darkside* a year later.

With the success of the Grand Guignol *Creepshow* in mind, Romero wrote “Trick or Treat” in 1983 as the pilot for a new TV series. This special presentation concerned a mean old man (Barnard Hughes) in 1940s rural America who spent every Halloween terrorizing the children of those farmers who owed him money. Then, on one Halloween, a trio of grotesque supernatural avengers returned the favor and nasty old Hackles got his just desserts. Directed by Bob Balaban, an actor who has appeared in films such as *2010: The Year We Make Contact* [1984], and *Deconstructing Harry* [1997], this unheralded 30-minute bundle became the ratings darling of the 1983 Halloween weekend and ranked highly in the Nielsens in major markets such as New York City. Produced at a frugal budget of \$200,000, “Trick or Treat” was a financial success which quickly led to the production of the *Tales from the Darkside* series, and an order for 23 additional episodes. Once *Tales from the Darkside* went to series, however, the episodic budget was sliced in half to a paltry \$100,000 per episode ... which left little margin for error. At one point, it was even rumored that the weekly special effects budget on *Tales from the Darkside* was a measly \$188.00 dollars!<sup>1</sup>

Still, production went on, low costs and all. The first season of *Tales from the Darkside* was shot utilizing non-union crews (another cost-cutter), with each episode taking only 2 to 3 days to lense. And, to save time, the series was bicoastal! It was housed in two places simultaneously: a former mattress factory in Los Angeles and a one-time Pink Floyd rehearsal hall in Long Island City, New

York.

Despite so many cost-saving measures, *Tales from the Darkside* did not skimp on either creativity or talent. Each episode featured at least one “name” actor to draw in audiences, and the *Darkside* roster of performers is consequently quite impressive. Vic Tayback (*Alice* [1976-85],) starred in “The New Man,” Brent Spiner (*Star Trek: The Next Generation* [1987-94]) showed up in “A Case of the Stubborns,” Penelope Ann Miller (*The Relic* [1997]) was the star of “Ring Around the Redhead,” Lisa Bonet (*Angel Heart* [1987]) headlined in “The Satanic Piano.” Robert Forster (*The Black Hole* [1979], *Jackie Brown* [1997], *Psycho* [1998]), Seth Green (*Buffy the Vampire Slayer* [1997-?]), Roy Dotrice (*Space: 1999* [1975-77], *Beauty and the Beast* [1988-91]), Darren McGavin, Tippi Hendren, Divine, Kareem Abdul-Jabbar, Christian Slater, Carol Kane, Bud Cort, Nancy Travis, and *Babylon 5*’s Jeff Conaway and Michael O’Hare all starred in various episodes as well.

The stories on *Tales from the Darkside* also came from big “name” writers. Stephen King’s “Word Processor of the Gods,” first published in *Playboy* as “Word Processor,” was one early entry in the first season. Other stories came from the works of Robert Bloch (“A Case of the Stubborns,” “Everybody Needs a Little Love,” “Beetles”), John MacDonald (“Ring Around the Redhead”), Ron Goulart (“Printer’s Devil”), and Frederic Brown (“The Greezenstacks”). Important genre voices also contributed teleplays. David Gerrold, the author of “The Trouble with Tribbles” on *Star Trek* offered teleplays for “If the Shoe Fits” and “Levitation.” George Romero, a talented writer in his own right, came up with “The Devil’s Advocate,” “The Circus” and “Baker’s Dozen.” Clive Barker wrote “The Yattering and Jack” and Stephen King penned the teleplay for “Sorry, Right Number.” Michael McDowell, a respected horror novelist, wrote and rewrote many of the teleplays, along with story editor Tom Allen (of *The Village Voice*), so there was no shortage of skill. The only limits, ironically, involved how many people and sets could be involved in each story, but even constraint could be construed as a challenge by the most inventive of minds. As Michael McDowell explained to interviewer Stanley Wiater:

In working for television, for a show such as *Tales from the Darkside* ... which are thirty minute shows—you have a very specific time frame.... And you have a progression of jolts in those frames. It’s a very tricky business to get everything in there for budgetary considerations, and tell a good story too ... I loved working for Laurel, the production company.... They have taught me a lot, and I love those kind of constraints.<sup>2</sup>

Despite such eager talent, the series did sometimes have a hard time finding the right tone, as some stories were tongue and cheek and others were deadly serious.

When all was said and done, *Tales from the Darkside* was a ratings success. It aired mostly on weekends, and WPIX in New York ran the program at 11:00 P.M. on Saturdays, a perfect slot for a horror show. Before long, the Laurel series was being broadcast in 125 cities around America and 25 countries around the world. Because of this success, the series budget was increased during its second year to \$124,000 per episode. Then, after the second year, something truly miraculous occurred—*Tales from the Darkside* was renewed for 42 additional episodes: two full seasons! The cost-cutting production and high-quality talent had paid off, but everyone was not happy with *Darkside*’s formula for success. Co-originator George Romero, for one, felt that the series still had many problems, its small budget among them. Out of irritation and disenchantment he ceased work as the series executive producer, and contributed no further stories beyond the four he had already written. When asked about



*Tales from the Darkside* by Paul Gagne, a biographer and interviewer, Romero was candid about its faults:

The production values are *not* high.... What elevates the series is Tom Allen's devotion to his job as story editor ... and the talents of some of the directors, the far-and-away best of which are Gornick, Harrison, Savini, and Shook.<sup>3</sup>

As *Tales from the Darkside* flew into its final two years, the tone of the series became ever campier, and that, coupled with the low costs, significantly reduced the series' overall quality and appeal. It was painfully obvious in many later episodes that each installment had only two sets, and no exteriors to work with. The acting became broader as well, and therefore what the once-promising series finally amounted to was two talented actors overplaying badly on one or two pedestrian sets. Despite the drop in quality, plans went ahead to create a second Laurel horror series, this one in the tradition of *Alfred Hitchcock Presents*. The series was to be called "Moment of Fear," but it never went beyond the pilot stage.

In 1988, the syndication game was becoming increasingly competitive with high-profile shows such as *Star Trek: The Next Generation*, (1987–1994), *Friday the 13th: The Series* (1987-90), *Freddy's Nightmares* (1988-90), *War of the Worlds* (1988-90), and *The Untouchables* (1988-90) flooding local TV station markets. As a long-standing, and by-now familiar commodity, *Tales from the Darkside* looked to some program buyers like old goods, and Laurel did a major rethink of their product. What the studio quickly came up with was a new horror anthology using most of the same creative personnel, and even some of the same actors from *Tales from the Darkside*. The unofficial sequel was called *Monsters* (1988), and it successfully carried the torch of low-budget horror stories into the early 1990s. The only alteration from *Darkside* was that each episode of *Monsters* featured, as the title suggested, a supernatural beast of some kind.

After four years on the air, *Tales from the Darkside* also begat a low-budget feature film. Based on the four-year TV series, *Tales from the Darkside: The Movie* was released in early summer of 1990 starring Deborah Harry, Christian Slater, and James Remar. With stories from Stephen King and Michael McDowell, the film was well-scripted, but it failed to make much of an impact at the box office.

As of this writing, six volumes of *Tales from the Darkside* have been released on VHS format, and each one includes five half-hour episodes.

### CRITICAL COMMENTARY

Like *The Twilight Zone*, *Night Gallery*, and old EC comics *Tales from the Crypt* and *Vault of Horror*, Laurel's *Tales from the Darkside* is a highly didactic horror series. If one looks beneath the veneer of gore and grue, it seems fairly clear that many episodes of this series are nothing more than modern morality plays, cautionary tales about what might happen to an individual who acts selfishly or maliciously. Of course, this sense of justice is no real revelation here. Despite the protestations of the conservative religious right, horror comics, films, and TV programs have almost universally been obsessed with morality. What other genre so actively, so creatively, and so thoughtfully discusses the existence of God and the devil, or in more general terms, of good and evil? What other genre concerns itself so heavily with the karmic notion that what goes around comes around? Regardless of the reasons why horror is seen as immoral, *Tales from the Darkside* follows in the footsteps of other

horror morality plays, which makes the series informative and even appropriate viewing for a young set. The “Darkside,” or “Other World” as the series Bible asserts, is actually a tool which balances the scales of justice, and numerous segments hammer home the notion that good is rewarded and sin punished. In George Romero’s “The Devil’s Advocate,” for instance, a loud-mouthed, opinionated talk show host (an early Rush Limbaugh) named Mandrake (Jerry Stiller) spews his hateful venom indiscriminately across the airwaves. He hurts people with his thoughtless words, is rude to his listeners, and is harsh in his judgment. As the episode wears on, Mandrake transforms before our eyes (in stages) into a horned, pig-nosed demon. He has died, you see, and will now spend eternity in a little room without doors or windows listening to the “on air” complaints of hell’s myriad denizens. His eternal plight is now to be as easily dismissed as he dismissed others.

“The Devil’s Advocate” was not alone in this moralistic approach. In “Beetles,” based on the Robert Bloch story, a thief who illegally takes possession of a sarcophagus is tormented by an Egyptian curse and killed by millions of beetles. In “Monsters in My Room,” a nasty stepfather who ridicules his sensitive stepson (Seth Green) gets his comeuppance when the monsters inhabiting the boy’s closet scare him to death. This episode sees not just evil punished and the innocent protected, it confronts two universal childhood fears: of “bogeyman” in the dark/closets, and of fathers who cannot understand why their boys like monsters and horror instead of sports and beer.

And so it went. In “A Choice of Dreams,” a vicious mobster (Abe Vigoda) escapes death, but ends up in a limbo where he is forced to confront those he has hurt in life. In “The Unhappy Medium,” a hypocritical evangelical (Connie Stevens) is swept away into hell for her trespasses. Each and every one of these stories advocates draconian justice in a rather significant way, and the only problem with this approach came from two factors. Firstly, in each of the stories a main character was a horrible, not just bad but *horrible* person, which made identification difficult. Secondly, the plotline of cosmic justice was reused so frequently that the “twist” endings of several installments became predictable and routine instead of genuinely surprising.

Fortunately, wit and humor would often lighten even the heaviest *Tales from the Darkside* morality play. “Let the Games Begin” concerned an angel and a demon vying for possession of an average Joe’s immortal soul. The resolution of this half-hour was a nice variation on what could have been a black-and-white story: neither side won. Even better, writer Peter O’Keefe humorously (and playfully) suggested in his teleplay that this resolution was not unique, but the way of all humanity. Most people are neither all good nor all bad—having good qualities like loyalty at the same time they are led to temptation.

This even-handed and funny approach to man’s morality cast some shades of gray in a video universe which tended to deal justice in absolutes. Similarly, Clive Barker’s “The Yattering and Jack” sought to make an interesting point about human nature. In this tale, another average guy named Jack is abused and bothered by an evil demon bent on destroying him and claiming his soul, but Jack never loses his perspective on life. “What will be, will be,” he repeats, eventually getting the better of his impatient, hellish nemesis. This jaunt, replete with demons, comedy, and pathos, reminded those excessive worriers out there to be grateful for the good things in life, because things could always be worse.

Irony and wit were also in evidence in “Printer’s Devil,” based on a Ron Goulart story. Exposing the evil necessary to create a best-selling novel, this adventure focused on a writer (Larry Manetti) who was forced to sacrifice animals and eventually his wife to succeed in the cutthroat profession of writing. The story not only gave voice to every writer’s catch-22 (“I can’t get an agent till I get a

publisher, and I can't get a publisher until I get an agent") but found a nice metaphor for the act of creation. Often a writer really does feel as if he is "sacrificing" important things in his life to continue writing. Blood, love, family ... it all goes into the job and onto the page. Of course, "Printer's Devil" is a harsh look at writers, agents, and the publishing world, but it makes its point with an easygoing, tongue-in-cheek approach.

Other stories about writing included "My Ghostwriter—The Vampire," in which an author used the life story of a real-life vampire to pen a best seller, and "The Deal," in which another writer made a pact with the devil so he could succeed in Hollywood. *Tales from the Darkside's* obsession with writing, with the act of creation, was an early TV attempt at reflexive storytelling. These shows acknowledged that the series was not only interested in horror, but aware of itself and its world, the larger context, in which the series existed. This conceit gave even some of the baser half-hours an intellectual tenor.

Although *Tales from the Darkside* sometimes attempted period pieces ("Everybody Needs a Little Love" and "The Enormous Radio" were set in the 1940s and "Strange Love" was set in the '30s), it was not an especially "visual" series because of its low budget. With no more than two sets (always interiors) per show, it often felt like radio or a stage play. This lack of visual panache is especially difficult to overlook in a horror TV series because in this genre how the audience sees things is as important as what it sees. Editing, angles, mise-en-scène, visual techniques such as slow-motion photography and distortion lenses would be used to augment the terrifying aspects of the stories. Sadly, *Tales from the Darkside* had neither the time nor expense to put resources in this area, and the result is a show which often appears cheap and is rarely as effective from an imagery standpoint as earlier anthology high points like *One Step Beyond* or *Night Gallery*.

Additionally, there is an ugly little philosophy that somehow crept into *Tales from the Darkside* which often makes the series a bit distasteful. It is an adolescent male's hatred and total fear of women. Far too many episodes of this series (and its follow-up series *Monsters*) display a very real and very appalling prejudice against females. Now, this author is no feminist critic looking to be offended at every turn. On the contrary, the evidence of a prejudice here is quite ample, and almost impossible to ignore. In "Pain Killer," a man learns that he can rid himself of chronic back pain by killing his bossy wife. In "Fear of Floating," a man will do literally anything—even enlist in the army—to avoid marriage. In "Do Not Open the Box" (directed by Jodie Foster), a nasty and venal woman corrupts her good husband and is rewarded by the loss of her soul to the devil. In "Comet Watch" and "The Word Processor of the Gods," meek little men with aspirations and worthwhile hobbies (writing and astronomy respectively) are henpecked by overweight, nagging wives who do not appreciate them.

In both "Comet Watch" and "Word Processor of the Gods," the wives are ditched (i.e., done away with) through supernatural methods, and their timid men live happily ever after with more acceptable (i.e., thin, pretty, submissive) replacements. Story after story on *Tales from the Darkside* viewed women in general and wives in particular as impediments to man's ultimate happiness. It was never the other way around. There was never a story in which a lovely woman married to a disgusting man sought to better herself through something like astronomy. And furthermore, the wife in "Word Processor of the Gods" is among the most offensive of all characters in modern horror TV. She is a muffin-eating loud-mouth who is so fat that she has to wear a dress which resembles a tent. She is a caricature, a stereotype of every man's worst nightmare, but she is also unrealistic. Why would the trim, meek, gentle Bruce Davison marry this crass cow? He wouldn't. Nobody would. Yet the teleplay

seeks to convince the audience that this is how men and women end up after marriage: the guys are henpecked and the women get fat, lazy, and demanding.

The central female character in “Do Not Open This Box” was not much better. As usual, she was married to a meek man with a hobby (this time the invention of useless gadgets). Like Davison’s wife in the former tale, this wife is dramatized in the most ignoble of terms. When she is given the opportunity to negotiate for a magic box, she asks for jewelry, clothes, a china pattern, and a refurbished kitchen. Women are not just fat, lazy, demanding, and overbearing, this story shares with us, they are materialistic to boot! Of course, the husband in this story is portrayed in totally sympathetic terms as decent, able, and supportive. Quite simply, *Tales from the Darkside* did not like women, and it seeped out again and again by choice of stories. Perhaps it was a result of the times. In the mid-80s, more and more women were leaving their traditional “domestic” roles and finding increased authority in the workplace. *Tales from the Darkside*’s predilection with tearing down females may have been a response to what some males may have considered a threat. For whatever the reason, it is an ugly facet to a series that should have known better.

Ultimately, any horror TV series has to be judged on a single criterion: Is it scary? *Tales from the Darkside*, overall, passes this litmus test. In “Seasons of Belief,” it is Christmas Eve and two self-satisfied parents tell their spoiled children about a make-believe monster called a Grither who attacks bad little boys and girls on Christmas Eve. The parents have made this beast wholly from the cloth just to teach their children a lesson, but the episode becomes an exercise in suspense as the adults keep piling on frightening attributes for this mythical Grither. Soon, the children are terrified ... and so is the audience. When something begins to pound on the door and the parents warn that the Grither is on its way to pay a visit, this horrific little fairy tale reaches an apex of terror.

“The Milkman Cometh,” from a story by Charles Grant, is another riveting half-hour that makes the most of a scary scenario. Horror almost always works best when there is an element of the desperate involved, and this half-hour remembers that fact. Because his family is almost out of money, because his wife can’t get pregnant, because the bill collectors are on the way, the rational Jerry Cooley (Robert Forster) does something irrational. He listens to the local stories that an unseen milkman has been granting wishes to those in the neighborhood who have left behind notes for him. Normally, Jerry would never believe in such things, but then Jerry is a desperate man. He writes the milkman a note asking for two things: a daughter and for cash. He is granted these wishes, at a price, of course, as the climax is revealed. “The Milkman Cometh” is frightening not just because it has an identifiable lead (who among us does not understand financial or career desperation?) but because it maintains the mystery of the milkman, who is seen only in shadow or silhouette. Curiosity is aroused at the same time that viewers begin to suspect that this is an arrangement poor Jerry should not have made. More impressively, “The Milkman Cometh” offers a supernatural explanation for the seemingly miraculous wealth of yuppies in 1980s America. Riches appear from nowhere but (like those pesky credit cards) payment later turns out to be a bitch. This *Tales from the Darkside* is also a reflection of an old ’50s urban legend about the neighborhood milkman stopping by and delivering not just milk, but loving, to lonely housewives.

Success or failure aside, one thing that can make a horror series an immortal pop culture phenomenon is its affection for its own genre and history. In this regard, *Tales from the Darkside* has at least one story that fits the bill. In “Distant Signals,” a humanoid alien travels to Earth to revive a long-forgotten television series which still has millions of fans ... somewhere out there. This canceled

series was called *Max Paradise*, and it was a cheesy, clichéd little detective drama. Yet to these aliens so far away, it was high art. “Distant Signals” casts Darren McGavin, Carl Kolchak himself, as the star of *Max Paradise*, and nicely reminds genre fans that one man’s garbage is another man’s gold. Not only is it great to see McGavin back in action as a detective, but the show is an affectionate nod to a downtrodden genre which despite a perceived (by critics, anyway) lack of quality is nonetheless beloved by millions. “Distant Signals” is *Tales from the Darkside*’s sincere statement about TV, fans, and horror, and it may be the series’ finest moment.

*Tales from the Darkside* is a mixed bag. It tries new things. It goes for wit where applicable, and occasionally it scares with surprising precision. It is not consistently brilliant, nor even consistently memorable. It is hit-or-miss all the way and filled with highs and lows all wrapped together in a cheap, dark package.

## CAST AND CREDITS

*Cast:* Paul Sparer (Narrator)

*Credits:* *Supervising Producer:* Mitchell Galin, T.J. Castronova. *Produced by:* William Teitler, Anthony Santa Croce. *Executive Producers:* Richard A. Rubinstein, George A. Romero, Jerry Golod. *Directors of Photography (various episodes):* Ernest Dickerson, John Fauer, Gideon Porath, Steve Ross. *Editors (various episodes):* Frank DePalma, Bill Flicker, Deborah Shaffer, Jeffrey Wolf. *Apprentice Editors:* Elia Arce. *Associate Producers:* Frank Martinez, Jan Saunders. *Casting Director:* Leonard Finger, Jean Scoccimarro. *Creative Consultant:* Tom Allen. *Visual Consultant (various episodes):* John Arnone, Christopher Nowaki, Mischa Petrow, Rosaria Sinisi. *Production Controller:* Tina Carbonell. *Assistant Directors (various episodes):* Evan Dunsley, Scott Williams, Katarina Wittich. *Second Assistant Directors (various episodes):* Julia Cart, Nal Kinsella, Tony To. *Assistant to Producer:* Donna Amos. *Assistant Camera:* Phil Abraham. *Second Assistant Camera:* Evan Estern. *Still Photographer:* Paula Stone, Robert Weekes. *Publicity:* PMK. *Gaffer:* Gary Hildebrand. *Best Boy:* Felix Rivera. *Third Electric:* Shaun Gilbert. *Key Grip:* Ruth Ammon. *Sound Mixer:* Richard Wadden. *Boom:* Tommy Lowe. *Script Supervisor:* Cynthia Rolfe, Kristine Greco. *Unit Manager:* Doon Allen. *Set Dresser:* Carla Gerona. *Costume Designer:* Oleksa. *Wardrobe Assistant:* Maggi Yule. *Special Effects Makeup:* Ed French. *Makeup Assistant:* Tom Lauten. *Construction Coordinator:* John Griffith. *Production Accountant:* Charles S. Carroll. *Assistant Production Accountant:* Jessica Abrams. *Production Office Coordinator:* Anne Nevin. *Property Masters:* Michael Courville, Peggy Parker, Jim Ransohoff. *Second Props:* James Gould. *First Scenic:* Charles Williams. *Second Scenic:* Anne Stuhler Segall. *Music (various episodes):* Hilary Bercovici, Michael Gibbs, John Harrison, Simon Manses, Erica Portnoy. *Title Music:* Donald Rubinstein, Erica Lindsey. *Associate Producer:* Erica Fox. *Special Effects:* John Cazin. *Casting Assistant:* Darien Morea. *Lighting Technicians:* Ian Christenberry, David Bergeson. *Best Boy Grip:* Damian Costa. *Grip:* Lawrence Bender. *Sound Editor:* Kini Kay. *Makeup/Hair:* Antoinette Ponzo. *Stage Manager:* Anthony Greene, Steve Roberts. *Production Assistants:* Heidi Scharfe, Mike Fidler. *Production Office Assistant:* Ana Castronova. *Story Assistant:* Christopher Orville. *Stand-Ins:* There Pare, John Marzilli. *Utility Man:* Tony Montesian. *Executive in Charge of Production:* Mitchell Galin. *Stunt Coordinator:* Donna Amos. *Unit Production Manager:* Leslie Chapman, Winter Horton. *Assistant to Property Master:* Alexis Djivre. *Lead Man:* John Cazin. *Construction Coordinator:* Lars Peterson. *Supervising Sound Editor:* Bob Candell. *Sound Editor:* Margie Cummins. *Postproduction Supervisor:* Owen Rudovsky. *Postproduction Coordinator:* Diana Dru Betsford. *Assistant Editors:* Edmund Fevrel, Dov Gottesfeld, Virginia Reticker, Skip Williams.

*Location Manager:* Jeremy Gardino. *Set Decorators:* Cindy Trueman. *Set Dresser:* Chava Danielson. *Special Effects Props:* Tommy Bellissimo. Laurel Productions in Association with JAYGEE Productions. Laurel TV.

## EPISODE GUIDE

**1. “Trick or Treat”** Written by George A. Romero; Directed by Bob Balaban; airdate: October 22, 1983; *Guest Cast:* Barnard Hughes (Gideon Hackles); Max Wright (Mr. Bundle); Nole Johnson (Billy); Frances Chaney (Witch); Ed French (Devil); Bill McNulty (Bluebeard); Joe Ponazzecki (Kimble); Brenda Currin (Sarah Kimble); Eddie Jones (Muldoon); Patrick Wilcox (Timmy Muldoon).

In 1940s rural America, mean old general store owner Mr. Hackles plays a cruel game every Halloween: the local farmers can send their children over to his “haunted house” to reclaim the family’s I.O.U.s. If the kids find them, the debts are forgiven, but the house is filled with fake monsters, ghouls, and other obstacles terrifying to children. After a particularly nasty Halloween go-round, Mr. Hackles is greeted by some *real* Trick-or-Treaters.

• *Series Episodes: First Season (1984–1985)*

**2. “The New Man”** Written by Mark Durand and Barbara Owens; From a story by Barbara Owens; Directed by Frank De Palma; airdate: September 24, 1984; *Guest Cast:* Vic Tayback (Alan Coombs); Chris Herbert (Jerry).

A recovering alcoholic attempts to make good to his tortured family, but finds his efforts sabotaged when he comes home after the first day at a new job to discover that he has a son he does not remember. Has he forgotten his own son because of the alcoholism, or has he come to a crossroads with the darkside?

**3. “I’ll Give You a Million”** Written by David Spiel and Mark Durand; From a story by John Harrison; Directed by John Harrison; airdate: October 1, 1984; *Guest Cast:* Keenan Wynn (Duncan Williams); George Petrie Jack Blaine).

Jack and Duncan, two aging millionaires, make an ill-fated deal: a million dollars for Jack’s eternal soul. Jack agrees initially, but when he falls ill he attempts to buy his way out of the contract.

**4. “Pain Killer”** Written by Haskell Barkin; Directed by Armand Mastroianni; airdate: October 8, 1984; *Guest Cast:* Lou Jacobi (Harvey Turman); Peggy Cass (Nadine Turman); Farley Granger (Dr. Roebuck); Faye Sappington (Ms. Tracy).

Harvey Turman has lived with the chronic pain of backaches for far too long, and his wife Nadine just won’t let up on him either. When Harvey goes to visit the family doctor, the physician suggests that perhaps getting rid of one pain will help him get rid of the other.

**5. “The Odds”** Written by James Sadwith; From a story by Carole Lucia Satrina; Directed by James Sadwith; airdate: October 15, 1984; *Guest Cast:* Danny Aiello (Tommy Vale); Tom Noonan (Bill Lacey); Robert Weil (Horace); Anthony Bishop (Phil); William Magerman (Drunk); Mario Todisco (Mafioso); Michael Quill (Lacey’s Man); Dave Johnson (Announcer).

Bookie Tommy Vale, known for his willingness to take any bet, no matter how much a long shot,

meets his match in Bill Lacey, a man who “never loses.” After Tommy and Bill make their unusual wager, that Tom will be dead by the next morning, Tommy starts to remember where he saw Billy before.

**6. “Mookie and Pookie”** Written by Dan Kleinman; From a story by Marc Fields and Dan Kleinman; Directed by Timna Ranon; airdate: October 29, 1984; *Guest Cast:* Tippi Hedren (Mrs. Anderson); Justine Bateman (Pookie Anderson); George Sims (Charles Anderson); Ron Asher (Mookie Anderson); Neil Kinsella (Delivery Man).

Mookie is a brilliant kid and a computer whiz, but he is also dying. Knowing that he has little time left to finish the job himself, he asks his twin sister Pookie to program his identity into the home computer.

**7. “D’jinn, No Chaser”** Written by Haskell Barkin; From a story by Harlan Ellison; Directed by Shelley Levinson; airdate: November 5, 1984; *Guest Cast:* Kareem Abdul-Jabbar (Jan Bin Jan); Colleen Camp (Connie Squires); Charles Levin (Dan Squires); Nate Esformes (Muktar).

A malevolent djinn, trapped impotent inside a bottle for ten millennia, terrorizes a newlywed couple in their first apartment together. An all-out battle of human will versus the supernatural ensues.

**8. “Inside the Closet”** Written by Michael McDowell; Directed by Tom Savini; airdate: November 12, 1984; *Guest Cast:* Fritz Weaver (Dr. Fenner); Gail (Roberta Weiss).

A graduate student named Gail is relieved to find an off-campus room in the home of Dr. Fenner, the dean of her veterinary college. Relief gives way to horror however, when Gail learns that she shares her room with a monstrous homunculus who dwells inside a miniature closet.

**9. “The Word Processor of the Gods”** Written by Michael McDowell; From a story by Stephen King; Directed by Michael Gornick; airdate: November 19, 1984; *Guest Cast:* Bruce Davison (Richard Hagstrom); Karen Shallo (Lina Hagstrom); Patrick Piccininni (Seth Hagstrom); William Cain (Mr. Nordhoff); John Mathews (Jonathan); Miranda Beeson (Belinda).

A henpecked husband and author inherits a special, homemade word processor from his dead nephew, Jonathan. Hounded by his irritating son and wife, Richard hooks up the machine in his basement work area and discovers that the “delete” button can remove more than just a line of text ... it can actually eliminate the person or object he writes about!

**10. “A Case of the Stubborns”** Written by James Houghton; From a story by Robert Bloch; Directed by Jerry Smith; airdate: November 26, 1984; *Guest Cast:* Eddie Bracken (Grandpa Tolliver); Bill McCutcheon (Doc Snodgrass); Christian Slater (Jody Tolliver); Brent Spiner (Reverend); Barbara Eda Young (Ma Tolliver); Trese Hughes (Voodoo Priestess).

Although he died the night before, stubborn old grandpa shows up for breakfast the next morning as cantankerous as ever. The old coot refuses to believe that he has passed away, so his grief-stricken family is forced to prove that unpleasant fact to him. At last, Grandpa starts to get the picture when he sneezes ... and his nose ends up in his handkerchief.

**11. “Slippage”** Written by Mark Durand; From a story by Michael Kube and Michael McDowell;

Directed by Michael Gornick; airdate: December 17, 1984; *Guest Cast*: David Patrick Kelly (Richard Hall); Phillip Casnoff (Chris Wood); Kerry Armstrong (Elaine Hall); Harriet Rogers (Mrs. Hall); David Lipman (Blake); Ruth Miller (Secretary).

At first, Richard Hall believes nothing is wrong when his paycheck is misplaced and his college transcripts seem to vanish. When his own friends begin to forget him, and his mother fails to recollect having a son, Richard realizes he is being erased from time.

**12. “All a Clone by the Telephone”** Written by Haskell Barkin; Directed by Frank De Palma; airdate: January 1, 1985; *Guest Cast*: Harry Anderson (Leon); Dick Miller (Seymour Furman); Tom Newman (Quentin); Marcie Barkin (Delores); Catherine Battistone (Telephone Voice).

A writer’s telephone answering machine develops an identity of its own, and even starts pitching ideas for new TV series to interested producers. At first Leon is vexed by his sentient phone machine, but then he realizes it may be his gateway to success.

**13. “In the Cards”** Written by Ted Gershuny; From a story by Carole Lucia Satrina; Directed by Ted Gershuny; airdate: January 21, 1985; *Guest Cast*: Dorothy Lyman (Catherine/Caterina); Carmen Matthews (Madame Marlene); Terri Keane (Ester); Woody Romoff (Isaac).

A fortune teller finds herself simultaneously irritated and terrified by a new pack of tarot cards which consistently forecast doom. She tries to rid herself of the evil cards, but somehow they keep finding their way back to her.

**14. “Anniversary Dinner”** Written by James Houghton; From a story by D.J. Pass; Directed by John Stryzik; airdate: January 28, 1985; *Guest Cast*: Alice Ghostley (Eleanor Collander); Mario Racuzzo (Henry Collander); Frederick Duke (Sybil); Michael Cedar (Mark).

Two old codgers living in the woods prepare to celebrate a wedding anniversary when a young woman stumbles upon their place. The old couple, thinking about dinner, offers the woman a “dip” in their “Jacuzzi.”

**15. “Snip, Snip”** Written by Howard Smith and Tom Allen; From a story by Howard Smith; Directed by Terence Cahalan; airdate: February 4, 1985; *Guest Cast*: Bud Cort, Carole Kane, Ed Kenney.

A small-time warlock believes he should be the winner of a lottery, but meets unexpected competition from a witch with similar expectations. The dueling witches duke it out for possession of the winnings, and in this war, experience counts.

**16. “Answer Me”** Written by Michael McDowell; From a story by D.W. Schuetz and Michael McDowell; Directed by Richard Friedman; airdate: February 11, 1985; *Guest Cast*: Jane Marsh (Joan).

An actress who has just moved into a new apartment in New York City is driven to distraction by a ringing telephone next door. The building super insists the apartment in question is vacant, a fact he is certain of because the last tenant was strangled to death inside.

**17. “The Tear Collector”** Written by John Drimmer and Geoffrey Loftus; From a story by Donald Olson; Directed by John Drimmer; airdate: February 18, 1985; *Guest Cast*: Jessica Harper (Prue);



Victor Carber (Ambrose Cavender); Linda Lee Johnson (Gretchen); Eric Bogosian (Junkie).

A woman of unending sorrows is solicited by a tear collector. He instructs her to cry into a small vial, and leave him her tears, but she misunderstands his ultimate motives.

**18. “The False Prophet”** Written by Jule Selbo; From a story by Larry Fulton; Directed by Jerry Smith; airdate: April 29, 1985; *Guest Cast:* Ronee Blakely (Cassie Pines); Justin Deas (Jones); Ann Hillary (Wanda); Bill Fiore (Voice of Horace X).

An overly superstitious young woman is caught between a rock and a hard place when various electronic fortune tellers offer her conflicting advice. Madame X seems to think that the man she has just met should be her lover, but Horace X believes that the same man could spell trouble.

**19. “Madness Room”** Written by Thomas Epperson; Directed by John Hayes; airdate: May 5, 1985; airdate: April 15, 1985; *Guest Cast:* Stuart Whitman (Edward Osborne); Therese Pare (Cathy Osborne); Nick Benedict (Michael).

A tale of deceit and red herrings as a wife plots to drive her husband crazy by inhabiting a so-called mad room somewhere in their luxury house. Or is the ailing husband actually using a spirit and the self-same “mad room” to drive his wife crazy?

**20. “If the Shoe Fits”** Written by David Gerrold; From a story by Louis Haber; Directed by Armand Mastroianni; airdate: May 6, 1985; *Guest Cast:* Dick Shawn (Bo Gumbs); John Zarchen (Peter); Catherine Hayes (Mimi); Harry Goz (Louie).

A faithless, feckless politician named Bo Gumbs has turned the world of politics into a circus, and won elections doing it. The darkside returns the favor by making Gumbs a clown.

**21. “Levitation”** Written by David Gerrold; From a story by Joseph Payne Brennan; Directed by John Harrison; airdate: May 13, 1985; *Guest Cast:* Joseph Turkel (The Great Kharma); Brad Cowgill (Frank); Cynthia Frost (Flora); Anthony Thompkins (Ernie).

The Great Kharma, a once-skilled illusionist, has seen better days. On one particularly lousy day, an annoying kid in the audience heckles Kharma, and meets a most unusual fate.

**22. “It All Comes Out in the Wash”** Written by Harvey Jacobs; Directed by Frank De Palma; airdate: May 20, 1985; *Guest Cast:* Vince Edwards (Henry Gropper); James Hong (Chow Ting); Ellen Winthrop (Ginger); Phil Roth (Sam Larchmont).

The Chow-Ting Laundry is really a pretty amazing place: it can clean up your dirtiest stains *and* remove your sins at the same time. For one particularly heartless businessman, this is just what the doctor ordered, but as usual, there is a price to pay.

**23. “Bigalow’s Last Smoke”** Written by Michael McDowell; From a story by Craig Mitchell and Kenneth Hanis; Directed by Timna Ranon; airdate: June 10, 1985; *Guest Cast:* Richard Romanus (Bigalow); Sam Anderson (Dr. Synapsis); Howard Dayton (Matthews); Catherine Battistone (Host).

Wanna quit smoking? Forget Nicotrol, and do what Mr. Bigalow did: submit yourself to the unusual treatment of the mysterious Dr. Synapsis.

**24. “Grandma’s Last Wish”** Written by Jule Selbo; Directed by Warner Shook; airdate: June 24, 1985; *Guest Cast:* Jane Connell (Grandma); Kate McGregor-Stewart (May); Paul Avert (Frank); Kelly Wolf (Greta); Gregory Itzin (Newton).

Grandma is getting old, and her family just doesn’t have the time for her whining and complaining anymore, so they decide to ship her off to a home for the elderly. When grandma gets a special party and a special wish, she uses it to make her family understand what it feels like to grow old.

• *Second Season (1985–1986)*

**25. “The Impressionist”** Written by Haskell Barkin; From a story by M. Coleman Easton; Directed by Armand Mastroianni; airdate: September 23, 1985; *Guest Cast:* Chuck McCann (Spiffy); Bobby DiCicco (Dr. Coe); Claudia Templeton, Jack Andreozzi, Gene Borkan.

An impressionist is recruited by the government to make contact with a most unusual alien utilizing his knowledge of body language. What follows is a tale of communication, miscommunication, and friendship.

**26. “Lifebomb”** Written by Michael McDowell; Directed by Frank De Palma; airdate: September 30, 1985; *Guest Cast:* Bill Macy (Ben); Robert Riesel (Henry); Samantha Harper (LeAnn); Geneva Simmons (Donna).

Overweight and fearful of heart attacks, a family man has a special medical device installed to prevent his death. Once equipped with the “lifebomb,” however, the man realizes that the cure may be worse than the disease.

**27. “Ring Around the Redhead”** Written by Ted Gershuny; From a story by John D. MacDonald; Directed by Ted Gershuny; airdate: October 7, 1985; *Guest Cast:* John Heard (Billy Malone); Penelope Anne Miller (Keena); Caris Corfman (Reporter); Greg Thornton (Jimbo); John Snyder (Prison Guard).

A man about to be executed for committing murders tells a curious reporter about the strange experience which has landed him in so much trouble. Not long ago, a space portal opened in a corner of his workshop and deposited there a whole galaxy of valuable jewels, ores ... and even a beautiful and innocent female space explorer named Keena.

**28. “Parlour Floor Front”** Written by Carole Lucia Satrina; Directed by Richard Friedman; airdate: October 14, 1985; *Guest Cast:* Adolph Caesar (Gillis); Donna Bullock (Linda); John Calonius (Doug); Rosette LeNoire (Gillis); Tiffani Caesar (Annette).

The yuppie owners of an apartment building want to get rid of Gillis, a gentle witch who has been a tenant there for some time. They try to buy him off, scare him off, and even scare him to death ... until they learn it is better not to cross witches.

**29. “Halloween Candy”** Written by Michael McDowell; Directed by Tom Savini; airdate: October 21, 1985; *Guest Cast:* Roy Poole (Killup); Tim Choate (Michael); Gary Pratt (Child); John Edward Allen (Goblin); David Varney (M.E.).

A miserly old man who has refused to give out candy on Halloween for years repeats his stingy

behavior anew. A goblin arrives on his doorstep with a sack full of insects and causes the old man to reconsider his stance.

**30. “The Satanic Piano”** Written by John Harrison; From a story by Carl Jacobi; Directed by John Harrison; airdate: October 28, 1985; *Guest Cast*: Michael Warren (Ben Croft); Lisa Bonet (Justine Croft); Phil Roth (Tony); Felice Orlandi (Wilson Farber).

A self-involved musical superstar ignores all rational advice from both his teenager, Justine, and his agent, and goes about acquiring an unusual instrument. It is an evil device which can create musical compositions from a person’s mind ... at a high price: the human soul.

**31. “The Devil’s Advocate”** Written by George A. Romero; Directed by Michael Gornick; airdate: November 4, 1985; *Guest Cast*: Jerry Stiller (Mandrake, “The Devil’s Advocate”); Engineer (Todd Oleson); Patrick Farrelly, Karen Shallo, Barbara Holmes, David L. Early (Callers).

Mandrake, the self-proclaimed “Devil’s Advocate,” runs a talk show every night at midnight, and he hasn’t missed a show in 13 long years. He is unceasingly cruel to his call-ins from Cincinnati, Nebraska, and other, much, much darker places too ... a fact that pleases his new boss ... the devil!

*Note*: This episode of *Tales from the Darkside* was savagely (and brilliantly) parodied by Jerry Stiller’s son, Ben, on *The Ben Stiller Show* in 1992. The segment was called “Tales of Low-Budget Clichéd Horror,” and it found the younger Stiller replaying the older Stiller’s role.

**32. “Distant Signals”** Written by Ted Gershuny; From a story by Andrew Weinder; Directed by Bill Travis; airdate: November 11, 1985; *Guest Cast*: Darren McGavin (Van Conway); Benny Van Dohlen (Mr. Smith); David Margulies (Gil Hearn); Joe Bova (Agent); Sheila King (Amy); John Bennes (Loomis); Doug Thomas (Grip).

*Max Paradise*, a detective series canceled by the network in mid-season, 1965, is revived by a “foreign” investor who wants to produce six new episodes to tie up all of the program’s loose ends. As it turns out, this forgotten old TV show, starring a has-been alcoholic actor named Van Conway, boasts millions of fans ... on a planet far, far away.

**33. “The Trouble with Mary Jane”** Written by Edithe Swensen; Directed by T.J. Castronova; airdate: November 18, 1985; *Guest Cast*: Phyllis Diller (Nora Mills); Lawrence Tierney (Jack Mills); Anita Dangler (Mrs. Knudsen) Tanya Fenmore (Mary Jane); Charlotte Von Vogt (Miss Brinkley); Carolyn Seymour (Aisha’s Voice); Jan Marzilli (Gad’s Voice).

A girl possessed by the demon Aisha Kandysha is exorcised by Jack and Nora, two small-timers hoping to make a quick 50,000 bucks. They hope to cast out the demonic beast first with a sacrificial pig, and then with another demon, the evil Gad, but find that neither venture is as successful as they might have wished.

**34. “Ursa Minor”** Written by Ted Gershuny; From a story by John Sladek; Directed by Ted Gershuny; airdate: November 25, 1985; *Guest Cast*: Marilyn Jones (Joan); Timothy Carhart (Richard); Jamie Ohar (Susan); Malachy McCourt (Dr. Stillman).

Little Susan receives the gift of “Teddy” the teddy bear, and almost immediately things start to go

wrong around the house. Susan's parents become fearful that the teddy bear is some kind of instrument of evil and seek to rid themselves of the demonic toy, only to discover that "Teddy" is one tough critter.

**35. "Effect and Cause"** Written by Michael McDowell; Directed by Mark Jean; airdate: December 2, 1985; *Guest Cast:* Susan Strasberg (Kate); Ben Marley (David); Judith-Marie Bergen (Janet); Gary Hershberger (Jeff); Jay Scorpio, Chip Heller (Paramedics).

A woman named Kate discovers that reality is not what she assumed when a variety of effects precede their causes: an ambulance arrives at her house before there has been an accident, and so forth. Kate concentrates on restoring the balance of reality but finds that fabric of time/space is more delicate than she imagined.

**36. "Monsters in My Room"** Written and directed by James Sadwith; airdate: December 16, 1985; *Guest Cast:* Greg Mullavey (Biff); Seth Green (Timmy); Beth McDonald (Helen); Elia Braca (Nana); Paula Truman (Aunt Teresa); Leona Cyphers (Horrible Witch); George Kyle (Bogey Man).

A sensitive little boy with a fondness for bug collections and music is terrorized by a macho and arrogant stepdad. A monster in his closet threatens the poor boy each night, and gives him the courage to stand up to his stepfather and tormenter.

**37. "Comet Watch"** Written by Harvey Jacobs and Jule Selbo; From a story by Harvey Jacobs; Directed by Warner Shook; airdate: January 6, 1986; *Guest Cast:* Fritz Weaver (Edmund Halley); Anthony Heald (Englebert Ames); Kate McGregor-Stewart (Charlene); Lara Burns (Sarah Rush).

Amateur astronomer Englebert Ames eagerly awaits the return of Halley's Comet, but he is distracted by a shrewish wife who torments him. As the comet approaches, a beautiful woman named Sarah flies out of Ames' telescope and claims that she rode the comet through the vastness of space with Edmund Halley himself!

**38. "Dream Girl"** Written by Timna Ranon; From a story by Barbara Paul; Directed by Timna Ranon; airdate: January 13, 1986; *Guest Cast:* Carolyn Seymour (Andrea); Jon Cedar (Syd); Lou Cetell (Otto); Shannon Krista (Didi); Dawson Mays (Joe).

The cast and crew of a stage play is transported into the dreamworld of Otto, a weird stagehand. Forced into roles that fit Otto's bizarre needs, the players in this unusually personal play stage a rebellion.

**39. "A New Lease on Life"** Written by Harvey Jacobs and Michael McDowell; From a story by Adam K. Jacobs; Directed by John Strydik; airdate: January 20, 1986; *Guest Cast:* Marie Windsor (Madame Angler); Robert Rothman (Archie Fenton); Ben Frank (Al); Robert Sutton (Mac); Patricia Pelham (Helen Tanner).

A man moves into a sinfully cheap apartment building to discover that his new home is a living entity. The walls bleed when pierced, the waste disposal is a hungry maw, and the apartment has a voracious appetite.

**40. "Printer's Devil"** Written by John Harrison; From a story by Ron Goulart; Directed by John

Harrison; airdate: January 27, 1986; *Guest Cast*: Larry Manetti (Junior Herman); Charles Knapp (Alexander Kelloway); Kate Charleson (Brenda Hardcastle); Tony Montesian (Julio); Michael Freeman (Voice of Mr. Guilford); Catherine Battistone (Voice of Ms. Garcia/Secretary).

A starving writer tired of rejections hears a radio advertisement which promises to turn any writer into a success. Subsequently, he visits the office of Alexander Kelloway, a corpulent agent who resorts to voodoo dolls and animal sacrifices to ensure the success of his clients.

**41. “The Shrine”** Written by Jule Selbo; From a story by Pamela Sargent; directed by Christopher T. Welch; airdate: February 8, 1986; *Guest Cast*: Lorna Luft (Christine); Coleen Gray (Lucille); Janet Wood (Toni); Larry Gilman (Chuck).

A woman reaching mid-life and facing the specter of another nervous breakdown returns home to her mother’s house to find all of her psychological problems intensified. Her mother still wants her to be the “perfect” little girl, and in fact, has come up with a perfect replacement if her real daughter should fail to comply.

**42. “The Old Soft Shoe”** Written by Art Monterastelli; Directed by Richard Friedman; airdate: February 10, 1986; *Guest Cast*: Paul Dooley (Chester Caruso); John Fiedler (Motel Owner); Kathy McLain (Carol); Dorothy Parke (Glenda); Patrick Farrelly (Sheriff).

A lascivious lingerie salesman, Chester Caruso, puts the moves on a lovely young woman he finds in his motel room. As it turns out, this beautiful girl is a troubled ghost who finds Chester, nicknamed “Old Soft Shoe,” reminiscent of a man named Harry, a man she once drowned in the bathtub at that very motel.

**43. “The Last Car”** Written by Michael McDowell; Directed by John Strysik; airdate: February 17, 1986; *Guest Cast*: Begona Plaza (Stacy); Scooter Stevens (Little Boy); Bert Williams (Train Conductor); Mary Carver (Mrs. Carne); Louis Guss (Old Man).

A ride home for the holidays turns into a nightmare for a college student when she finds herself on a one-way train ride to the Darkside. Surrounded by strange passengers and bizarre apparitions, the college student realizes that something tragic has happened to her.

**44. “A Choice of Dreams”** Written by James Houghton; From a story by Edward F. Shaver; Directed by Jerry Smith; airdate: April 28, 1986; *Guest Cast*: Abe Vigoda (Jake Corelli); David Chandler (Michaelson); Ralph Monaco (Angelo); David Glen (Ross).

A mob boss is sentenced to death when a physician tells him he has cancer. Hoping to escape his fate, Corelli seeks the assistance of After Life Co., a place where his disembodied brain can be maintained indefinitely, and he can “dream” for all eternity.

**45. “Strange Love”** Written by Edithe Swensen; Directed by Ted Gershuny; airdate: May 5, 1986; *Guest Cast*: Harsh Nayyar (Edmund Alcott); Marcia Cross (Marie); Patrick Kilpatrick (Dr. Philip Carroll).

In 1935, a handsome physician tends to a beautiful, injured vampire while her arrogant husband (also a creature of the night) looks on. When the vampire mistress, Marie, requires additional care, the

doctor is “persuaded” to be a permanent guest of the bloodsucking couple ... a problem for him because he has fallen madly in love with Marie.

**46. “The Unhappy Medium”** Written by Edythe Swensen; Directed by Dusty Nelson; airdate: May 18, 1986; *Guest Cast:* Connie Stevens (Carolyn); Carolyn Clark (Jenny); Richard Kuhlman (John); Peter Miller (Farley Wright).

After evangelist Farley Wright passes on to his afterlife reward, three people gather to hear his will: his sister, his assistant, and his young niece. He has reasons to hate all of them, so he takes possession of his niece’s body.

**47. “Fear of Floating”** Written by Donald Wollner; From a story by Scott Edelman; Directed by John Lewis; airdate: May 25, 1986; *Guest Cast:* Howard Sherman (Arnold); Leon Russom (Buzz); Anne Lange (Marcia Smith); Yeardley Smith (Betty-Ann).

A young man fleeing a shotgun wedding to a pregnant girlfriend tries to enlist in the army. The army thinks he may be worth their time, however, because of his mysterious ability to float.

**48. “The Casavin Curse”** written by Edythe Swensen; Directed by Frank DePalma airdate: July 7, 1986; *Guest Cast:* Joe Cortese (Nicholas); Catherine Parks (Gina); Scott Lincoln (Jeffery); Julie Ariola (Miranda); John Brandon (Lieutenant).

Lovely Gina shares the Casavin family curse: she kills the one she loves. A police detective, refusing to believe that such a beautiful, gentle woman can commit murder, soon finds himself falling (unwisely) for her.

• *Third Season (1986–1987)*

**49. “The Circus”** Written by George A. Romero; From a story by Sydney J. Bounds; Directed by Michael Gornick; airdate: September 22, 1986; *Guest Cast:* Kevin O’Connor (Bragg); William Hickey (Dr. Nis); Jacques Sandulescu (Nanoosh); David Thornton (Werewolf); Ed French (Vampire).

A cynical reporter who has sought to debunk a particular circus finds himself at the very carnival he hoped to destroy. After a few pathetic and monstrous attractions, the reporter realizes that he is to be a participant in the show himself.

**50. “I Can’t Help Saying Goodbye”** Written by Jule Selbo; From a story by Ann MacKenzie; Directed by John Strysik; airdate: September 29, 1986; *Guest Cast:* Brian Benben (Max); Alison Sweeney (Karen); Loren Cedar (Libby); Helen Duffy (Flora); LaGloria Scott (Susie).

A young girl, cursed with Cassandra-like premonitions, cannot resist saying goodbye to those loved ones who she sees dying in her clairvoyant visions. This fact is noted by relatives, and soon people are starting to blame the psychic girl for a string of deaths.

**51. “The Bitterest Pill”** Written by Michael McDowell and Jule Selbo; From a story by Frederick Pohl; Directed by Bryan Michael Stoller; airdate: October 6, 1986; *Guest Cast:* Mark Blankfield (Tinker); Joseph Carafello (Harlan); Catherine Battistone (Margerie); Jason Horst (Jonathan).

A married couple wins the lottery and falls prey to an inventor who claims that he has created a pill

which can turn the human mind into a fast-working computer. Once the pill is swallowed, it does create some unusual changes in a member of the household.

**52. “Florence Bravo”** Written by Edythe Swensen; Directed by John Lewis; airdate: October 19, 1986; *Guest Cast:* Lori Cardille (Emily); David Hayward (David); Carol Levy (Julie Anne); Lauren Klein (Florence Bravo).

Florence Bravo, an ardent feminist who shot her adulterous husband, once lived in a house just purchased by a married couple experiencing marital difficulties of their own. Soon, Florence Bravo’s ghost begins to haunt the wife, who fears that her own husband’s illicit romances have begun anew.

**53. “The Greezenstacks”** Written by Nancy Doyne; From a story by Frederic Brown; Directed by Bill Travis; airdate: October 27, 1986; *Guest Cast:* Craig Wasson (Sam Hummel); Tandy Cronyn (Edith Hummel); Larry Pine (Uncle Richard); Lana Hirsch (Audrey); Stephanie Cassel (Real Estate Lady).

The Greezenstacks are the little doll family that Audrey has received as a gift, along with a dollhouse. When the behavior of Audrey’s real family starts to mimic the behavior of the make-pretend Greezenstacks, Audrey’s dad begins to worry that something is not right.

**54. “Black Widows”** Written by Michael McDowell; Directed by Karl Epstein; airdate: November 3, 1986; *Guest Cast:* Margaret O’Brien (Mrs. Mildred Webster); Theresa Saldana (Audrey Webster); Paul Eiding (Reverend Joy); Joe D’Angelo (Robert); Howard Dayton (Salesman).

A young waitress urges his mother to get out of their trailer and enjoy life, but old Mrs. Webster just likes sitting in her trailer, knitting, and spotting the occasional spider. As a matter of fact, Mrs. Webster is a spider herself, and so is her unknowing daughter.

**55. “A Serpent’s Tooth”** Written by Edythe Swensen; Directed by Frank De Palma; airdate: November 17, 1986; *Guest Cast:* Renee Taylor (Pearl); Louis Quinn (Myron); Jared Rushton (Richie); Ron Sloan (Barrie); Joann Willette (Madelaine); Brett Marx (Marc).

A nagging Jewish mother worries about everybody and everything until she receives a mystical serpent’s tooth which makes all her wishes and commands come true. The magic soon backfires on Pearl, however, when the serpent’s tooth misconstrues a slip of the tongue to be a wish.

**56. “Baker’s Dozen”** Written by George A. Romero; From a story by Scott Edelman; Directed by John Sutherland; airdate: November 24, 1986; *Guest Cast:* Mabel King (Ms. Cousins); Larry Manetti (Henry Hogan); Vernon Washington (Kitchen Rat); Therese Pare (Helen Hogan).

An advertising agent approaches Miss Cousins, the proprietor of an unusual bakery, about creating a cookie franchise. Miss Cousins, who makes mood-altering cookies and voodoo doll gingerbread cookies, is resistant to the idea, and her assistant warns the agent that she is a bayou witch-woman.

**57. “Seasons of Belief”** Written by Michael McDowell; From a story by Michael Bishop; Directed by Michael McDowell; airdate: December 1, 1986; *Guest Cast:* E.G. Marshall (Dad); Margaret Klenck (Mom); Sky Berdani (Jimbo); Jenna Von Oy (Stefa); Mark Capri (Uncle Mike).

A nice suburban family decides to spend an old-fashioned Christmas Eve together, but the children of

the household are severely lacking in Christmas spirit and even go so far to state that Santa Claus doesn't exist. The father responds to this sacrilege by telling the story of the Grither, a monstrous beast from the North Pole who can hear when insolent little boys and girls call his name.

**58. “Heretic”** Written by Edythe Swensen; Directed by Jerry Smith; airdate: December 8, 1986; *Guest Cast:* Roberts Blossom (Inquisitor); Bruce MacVittie (Hart); Michael O’Hare (Jimmy); Alan Scarfe, Domonic Marcus.

A man who has used unsavory means to purchase a 16th century portrait of the Spanish Inquisition finds himself facing a real-life inquisition when he is propelled into the painting, into the past. If he does not return the painting to the rightful owners in the monastery and confess to his sins, he will be tortured.

**59. “Miss May Dusa”** Written and directed by Richard Blackburn; airdate: January 12, 1987; *Guest Cast:* Sofia Landon (Miss May Dusa); Gary Macjchszak, Yolanda Childress, Steve R. Tracy.

Miss May Dusa is actually Medusa, a woman with the fearsome ability to turn anybody who looks at her to stone. Still, Miss May Dusa does not want to hurt anyone, and she is particularly happy to befriend a blind man who cannot be affected by her destructive powers.

**60. “The Milkman Cometh”** Written by Donald Wollner; From a story by Charles L. Grant; Directed by John Stryzik; airdate: January 19, 1987; *Guest Cast:* Robert Forster (Jerry Cooley); Seymour Cassel (Howard Driscoll); Shannon Wilcox (Ruth Cooley); Chad Allen (Sandy Cooley); Edna (Barbara Sloan).

An advertisement artist and his family are on their last 200 dollars in the bank when young Sandy reports that all the neighbors have been granted wishes (including money and cars) by the milkman. Desperate, the artist asks the magic milkman from the “While You Sleep Dairy” to help his wife become pregnant with a little girl. Amazingly the unseen milkman obliges ... with some interesting results.

**61. “My Ghostwriter—The Vampire”** Written by Peter O’Keefe; From a story by Scott Edelman published in *D.C. Comics*; Directed by Frank DePalma; airdate: January 26, 1987; *Guest Cast:* Jeff Conaway (Peter Prentiss); Roy Dotrice (Count Draco); Jillie Mack (Technical Advisor); Chi Chi Navarro (Carla).

A horror writer is offered 900 years of authentic vampire stories by the regal Count Draco in exchange for sanctuary in his apartment. When his novel, *900 Years of Darkness*, becomes a best seller, the writer gets arrogant about his accomplishment and his vampire house guest demands a new accommodation.

**62. “My Own Place”** Written by Ted Gershuny and Perry Lang; Directed by Ted Gershuny; airdate: February 2, 1987; *Guest Cast:* Perry Lang (Sandy); Nancy Travis (Laura); Caryn West (Cynthia); Harsh Nayyar (Ram); Bina Sharif (Maya).

All Sandy wants is a little space for himself. All his life he has had roommates or family to share his homes with him ... until the day he moves into his brand new, spacious New York City apartment. To Sandy’s dismay, a mystical apparition, a “roommate,” shows up in his new place to teach him a thing



or two about company.

**63. “Red Leader”** Written by Edithe Swensen; Directed by John Sutherland; airdate: February 9, 1987; *Guest Cast*: Joe E. Tata (Alex); Brioni Farrell (Amanda); Carmine Caridi (Jake); Peter Bromilow (Red Leader); Joseph Della Sorte (Minion).

Businessman Alex Hayes has lived a life of sin by cheating people out of money and following through on bad deals. His bad deeds have not gone unnoticed, and now “Red Leader,” unceasingly searching for that rare bad seed, has come up from hell to interview him.

**64. “Everybody Needs a Little Love”** Written John Sutherland; From a story by Robert Bloch; Directed by John Sutherland; airdate: February 16, 1987; *Guest Cast*: Jerry Orbach (Roberts); Richard Portnow (Curtis); Phil Lenkowsky (Detective); Don Peoples (Lt. Mann); Teresa L. Jones (Mannequin).

In the 1940s, a washed-out insurance salesman and a drunken bar buddy steal a beautiful mannequin, which they name “Estelle,” from a nearby storefront. The salesman watches with worry as his friend becomes increasingly bewitched by Estelle, who is showing some distinct signs of life.

**65. “Auld Acquaintances”** Written by Edithe Swensen; Directed by Richard Friedman; airdate: February 23, 1987; *Guest Cast*: Linda Thorson (Elizabeth); Sallie Grace (Mary).

Two witches, who have a long and complicated history together, argue over the right to possess a sacred and powerful talisman.

**66. “The Social Climber”** Written by Ellen Sandhaus; Directed by Armand Mastroianni; airdate: March 2, 1987; *Guest Cast*: Albert Hague (Anthony); Robert Romanus (Rob); Talia Balsam (Gail); Leslie Chain (Laura); Irene Roseen (Maid).

At a magic shoe store, the old axiom “if the shoe fits, wear it” are words to remember. However, if the shoe belongs to a dead man, one better be careful where one places one’s feet.

**67. “The Swap”** Written by Dick Benner; Directed by John Drury; airdate: April 20, 1987; *Guest Cast*: Charles Ludham (Bubba); Maria Manuche (Anna Belle); Jim Wlcek (Claude); Timothy Jenkins (Jean Baptiste).

A man experimenting with the ability to switch his soul from one body to the other is poisoned by his wife and her lover. However, to his wife’s shock, the dead man’s spirit has switched places with someone.

**68. “Let the Games Begin”** Written by Peter O’Keefe; Directed by John Lewis; airdate: May 10, 1987; *Guest Cast*: David Groh (Angel/Aldo Anderson); Jane Summerhays (Demon/Doris Kramer); Earl Hindman (Harry Carson); Willie Reales (Bellhop).

A man at his class reunion has a coronary in his hotel room during a class reunion and dies, but both heaven and hell have a valid claim on his eternal soul. Agents for each domain then adopt disguises to determine if the mortal’s true nature is good or evil.

**69. “The Enormous Radio”** Written by Guy Gallo; From a story by John Cheever; Directed by Bill Travis; airdate: May 17, 1987; *Guest Cast*: Christine Estabrook (Irene); John Rothman (Jim); Kate

O'Toole (Clare); Peter Webster (John); Frank Ammirati (Max); Catherine Gaffican, Chet London, Beth Broderick, Kit Le Fever (Radio Voices).

In 1947, a happily married couple purchases a radio which allows them to spy on the private lives of their neighbors. Soon the couple is questioning their own happiness, and fighting as vociferously as those disembodied voices emanating from their radio.

• *Fourth Season (1987–1988)*

**70. “Beetles”** Written by Robert Bloch; Directed by Frank DePalma; airdate: September 21, 1987; *Guest Cast:* Rod McCary (Arthur Hartley); Sirri Murad (Ahmed Bay); Colm Meaney (Policeman).

In 1938, a collector and thief of archaeological treasures is warned about a sacred Egyptian sarcophagus which has recently come into his possession. He is told that if he touches the mummified princess inside it, he will be cursed to a terrible death at the hands (and legs) of a million scarab beetles.

**71. “Mary, Mary”** Written by Jule Selbo; From a story by Jule Selbo and Katarina Wittich; Directed by Katarina Wittich; airdate: September 28, 1987; *Guest Cast:* Margaret Whitton (Mary Jones); A.C. Weary (David); Fred Burstein (Scott).

A withdrawn woman named Mary who lacks confidence lives in a protected fantasy world inside her apartment until a neighbor named David expresses interest in her. By this time, however, Mary’s fantasy world has grown so strong, so hypnotic, that David discovers a surprise when he enters her apartment.

**72. “The Spirit Photographer”** Written by Mark Patrick Carducci and Brian Thomas Jones; Directed by Bill Travis; airdate: October 5, 1987; *Guest Cast:* Frank Hamilton (Algernon Colesbury); Richard Clarke (Harry Bainbridge); Terres Unsoeld (Lenore).

A steadfast photographer purchases a haunted house in hopes of capturing ghosts and spirits on film. To this end, he has invented a machine which should make the spirits visible ... but which has an inverse side-effect for the living as well.

**73. “The Moth”** Written by Michael McDowell; Directed by Jeffrey Wolf; airdate: October 12, 1987; *Guest Cast:* Deborah Harry (Sybill); Jane Manning (Ma).

Sybill is a witch, and her mother does not approve of it one lick. When Sybill is injured, her last wish is that her mother catch her soul (in the form of a moth) in a bottle and preserve it so that Sybill can return from the grave and reclaim it. The mother resorts to witchcraft to keep her daughter dead, but she has not reckoned on Sybill’s superior powers.

**74. “No Strings”** Written and directed by David Odell; airdate: October 19, 1987; *Guest Cast:* T.J. Castronova (Eddie); Barry Denne (Mr. D.); Cameron Milzer (Tiffany); Brad Fisher (Nick); Derek Loughran (Paulie); John Marzilli (Motu’s Voice).

Eddie has struggled long and hard to attain his position as kingpin of the underworld. To celebrate his ascendancy, he proposes a Grand Guignol puppet show which will star the corpse of his most prominent “underworld” nemesis.

**75. “The Grave Robber”** Written by Harvey Jacobs and Donald Wollner; From a story by Harvey Jacobs; Directed by Jeff Schiro; airdate: October 26, 1987; *Guest Cast:* Arnold Stang (Tapok); Polly Draper (Eileen); Darren Kelly (Dr. Gromley); Ed Kovens (Ahmed).

Two archaeologists run into trouble when they desecrate a tomb and come face to face with an angry guardian Mummy. One of the archaeologists suggests a game to save their lives, and then selects strip poker.

**76. “The Yattering and Jack”** Written by Clive Barker; Directed by David Odell; airdate: November 2, 1987; *Guest Cast:* Phil Fondacaro (Jack); Tony Carbone (Yattering); Thomas Newman (Beelzabub); Danielle Brisebois (Amanda); Barbara Shapiro (Caroler).

At Christmas time, Jack returns home to find dramatic poltergeist activity raging there. His house is haunted by a short, violent demon called Yattering who would like nothing better than to ruin Jack’s holiday with his daughter Amanda ... but Jack is a man who takes life as it comes.

**77. “Seymourlama”** Written by Harvey Jacobs and Donald Wollner; From a story by Harvey Jacobs; Directed by Bruce Dolin; airdate: November 9, 1987; *Guest Cast:* Divine (Chi Fun); J.D. Roth (Seymourlama); Kathleen Doyle (Ellen); David Gale (Henry); Cathy Lipinsky (Madame Wu).

Bratty Seymour’s parents are astonished when two foreign dignitaries show up at the doorstep to claim that their obnoxious son is actually the reborn ruler of an ancient kingdom. Seymour thinks being “Seymourlama” is a great gig, but even in the most godly of pursuits mistakes are sometimes made.

**78. “Sorry, Right Number”** Written by Stephen King; Directed by John Sutherland; airdate: November 16, 1987; *Guest Cast:* Deborah Harmon (Katie Weiderman); Arthur Taxier (Bill Weiderman); Rhonda Dotson (Dawn); Polly (Katherine Britton); Jeff (Brandon Stewart); Nicole Huntington (Connie); Catherine Battistone (Voice on Phone).

A horror author and his wife receive a phone call from a woman in distress. They fear the caller is a family relative, but the identity of the strange caller is not learned for ten years, long after the author has succumbed to a fatal heart attack.

**79. “Payment Overdue”** Written by Dick Benner; Directed by John Drury; airdate: February 8, 1988; *Guest Cast:* Maura Swanson (Jeanette); Lewis Arlt (Michael); Wanda DeJesus (Voice on Phone).

A ruthless telephone debt collector’s nasty methods have led an immigrant to commit suicide. Now the immigrant’s spirit plans to repay her debt.

**80. “Love Hungry”** Written and directed by John Strydik; airdate: February 15, 1988; *Guest Cast:* Sharon Madden (Betsy Cowland); Larry Gelman (Elmo); Diana Hale (Landlady); John Romo (Al); Catherine Battistone, Neil Kinsella (Food Voices).

An obese woman who is tired of diets and gimmicks signs up with a unique weight-loss program. A unique hearing aid allows her to hear the anguished voices of food as it is eaten, and special glasses allow her to see the faces of her meals!

**81. “The Deal”** Written by Granville Burgess and Allen Coulter; Directed by T.J. Castronova; airdate: February 22, 1988; *Guest Cast*: Allen Garfield (Donald); Bradley Whitford (Tom Dash); Robert Costanzo (Dessari); Elyssa Paternoster (Cassie); Kristine Grego (Secretary); Jon Jacobs (Jerome).

An aspiring screenwriter makes a deal with the devil to sell his screenplay to Hollywood. Once at Tinseltown however, the screenwriter watches as his wonderful script is distorted and destroyed by ludicrous changes ... so he attempts to renegotiate his pact with Satan.

**82. “The Apprentice”** Written by Ellen Sandhaus; Directed by Eleanor Gaver; airdate: May 1, 1988; *Guest Cast*: Haviland Morris (Sarah McBride); Wayne Tippit (Magistrate Thomas Branford); Elizabeth Neuman (Jane); Gary Lahti (Peter).

A college student is transported back to a 16th-century Puritan community. Although she tries to fit in, this liberated 20th-century woman is soon branded a witch for her assertive ideas and attitudes.

**83. “The Cutty Black Sow”** Written by Michael McDowell; From a story by Thomas F. Monteleone; Directed by Richard Glass; airdate: May 2, 1988; *Guest Cast*: Huckleberry Fox (Jamie); Paula Trueman (Great Grandma); Timothy Landfield (Father); Sharon Ullrick (Mother); Mary Alison Griffin (Gloria).

The cutty black sow is a rampaging Celtic grim reaper who will steal the soul of anyone who perishes on Halloween night. When young Jamie hears this frightening story from his grandmother, who is terminally ill, he takes prudent steps to protect her and the rest of his family from harm.

**84. “Do Not Open the Box”** Written by Franco Amurri and Bob Balaban; Directed by Jodie Foster; airdate: May 9, 1988; *Guest Cast*: Eileen Heckart (Ruth Pennywell); William Le Massena (Charlie Pennywell); Richard B. Shull (Delivery Man); Fay Gold (Clarissa).

An old inventor named Charlie is heckled by his obnoxious wife, Ruth, and pressured into opening a small chest marked “do not open this box.” Soon afterwards, a delivery man shows up, demanding the return of the box unopened, but the obnoxious wife sees his arrival as an opportunity to be greedy, not an opportunity to do good.

**85. “Family Reunion”** Written by Edithe Swensen; Directed by Tom Savini; airdate: May 16, 1988; *Guest Cast*: Stephen McHattie (Robert Perry); Daniel Terrence Kelly (Bobby); Patricia Tallman (Janice); Marilyn Rockafellow (Trudy).

A worried father learns that his son is a werewolf, and runs away with the boy to the woods. The boy’s mother and a social worker track them down, and there is a confrontation with not one lycanthrope, but two!

**86. “Going Native”** Written by Ted Gershuny; From a story by Andrew Weiner; Directed by Ted Gershuny; airdate: May 23, 1988; *Guest Cast*: Kim Griest (Claire); John Aprea (Lee); Cynthia David (Amy); Richard Kuhlman (Mark); Pamela Dean Kenny (Janine).

An extraterrestrial visitor hoping to learn more about the human race delves into the peculiarities of our species. She falls in loves, experiences emotion, and comes to a singular conclusion about what it means to be human.

**87. “Hush”** Written by John Sutherland; From a story by Zenna Henderson; Directed by Allen Coulter; airdate: July 4, 1988; *Guest Cast:* Nile Lanning (Jennifer); Eric Jason (Buddy Warren); Bonnie Gallup (Beth Warren).

A baby-sitter gets more than she bargained for when the sick child she is looking after shows off his new invention: a device which can suck the life out of people. Soon the device, which keys on sound, is out of control, and the baby-sitter and her ward are fighting a deadly battle for their lives.

**88. “Barter”** Written by Jule Selbo; Directed by Christopher T. Welch; airdate: July 11, 1988; *Guest Cast:* Jack Carter (Klaatzu); Jill Jaress (Ruthie); Michael Santiago (Nicky); Miguel Alamo (Little Nicky).

In a strange twist on *I Love Lucy*, ditzy Ruthie buys a “quick freeze” device from an alien to use on her hyperactive child, “Little Nicky.” This doesn’t sit well with Big Nicky, especially when Ruthie’s purchase freezes Little Nicky permanently!

**89. “Basher Malone”** Written by Peter O’Keefe; Directed by Anthony Santa Croce; airdate: July 18, 1988; *Guest Cast:* Vic Tayback (Tippy Ryan); Steve Strong (Basher Malone); Marie Denn (Mama Malone); Marlene Casamento (Ursula); Magic Schwarz (Trog); Scott St. James (Announcer); Jack Armstrong (Lockjaw); Brinke Stevens (Cindy); Gregory Uhland (Injured Wrestler).

Basher Malone is a virtuous man and one heck of a wrestler. The forces from hell despise him for both qualities, and do anything they can, even fight dirty, to steal his championship.

## *Alfred Hitchcock Presents (1985–1990)*

### CRITICAL RECEPTION

“an odd remake, or ‘update’ ... from the old TV show that lapsed in 1965. Although Hitchcock himself has also lapsed, he reappears on film between each of these episodes, doing his usual vaudeville turn.... Meanwhile, new actors and new directors apply themselves to the same golden-oldie stories.... One of the nice things about Hitchcock was his horror-relish.... And the remakers and updaters have been true to the relish.”—John Leonard, *New York*, May 13, 1985, page 110.

“Suspense was minimal and the hoped for surprise nonexistent ... *Hitchcock* looked like it was padded ... to fill out the half-hour running time.”—*Variety*, October 9, 1985, page 94.

“Although *Alfred Hitchcock Presents* has settled for simply remaking old episodes ... it seems fresher and more vital than the [new] *Twilight Zone*. No supernatural morality plays here; just some deft storytelling and a refreshingly sardonic view of human nature.... The famous Hitchcock twist endings sometimes fall flat in 1985. But when they work, they leave the viewer with a unique frisson: a grin accompanied by a sinking feeling in the stomach.”—Richard Zoglin, *Time*, December 23, 1985, page 66.

### FORMAT

In this 1985 NBC half-hour revival of the 1955-65 anthologies, *Alfred Hitchcock Presents* and *The Alfred Hitchcock Hour*, not much is different stylistically, except the addition of color. Each episode of the remake launches with the close-up curves (which appear metallic silver like a knife blade) of filmmaker Alfred Hitchcock’s famous profile. This is the logo he invented for the first series, and it is reused here. To the familiar tune of “Funeral March of the Marionette,” the title *Alfred Hitchcock Presents* then descends upon the director’s sizable profile.

As for the series itself, it follows Hitchcock’s tenet to feature suspense, terror, crime, and danger, but *not* stories of the supernatural variety. Many episodes of the 1980s *Alfred Hitchcock Presents* (especially those produced on NBC) are remakes of stories already dramatized on the earlier series, but in color, with increased violence, and some necessary contextual updating. Alfred Hitchcock, who had passed away in 1980, is still the host of the mid-80s series, resurrected through colorized footage from the earlier shows. In these intros, Hitchcock begins the festivities with his trademark “Gooood Eveeening” opener. Additionally, he is usually involved in some ludicrous enterprise (stuck in a jar in the intro for “The Jar”; seen through a peephole in the intro for “The Creeper”; standing on the deck of a ship in “Night Caller”; part of a police line-up in “Man from the South,” etcetera) which manages not only to introduce the story, but to trash the show’s sponsors, for whom Hitchcock had only contempt. Hitchcock’s fly-in-the-ointment commentary is then followed by the drama at hand.

At the end of each adventure, Hitchcock is again seen, and he delivers a few entertaining *bons mots* before signing off for the evening.

### HISTORY

*Alfred Hitchcock Presents* (the original series) is one of TV's select greats, though it is not frequently rerun in the '90s, except to celebrate special dates, such as Hitchcock's one hundredth birthday (August 13, 1999). Still, it remains part of the Golden Age of TV, and of the Golden Age of TV anthologies as well. Debuting in 1955, the series was launched well before *Thriller*, *The Twilight Zone*, or *Alcoa Presents: One Step Beyond*. Unlike those series, however, *Alfred Hitchcock Presents* was a horror anthology based on reality, not the fantastic, paranormal, or supernatural. Murder, double-crosses, crime schemes gone wrong, and other human problems such as jealousy, greed, and selfishness were showcased along with a heavy helping of suspense and irony. The original show boasted a few interesting ground rules as well: only published stories would be adapted for production, and no supernatural themes would be highlighted (though this latter rule was circumvented sometimes, as in the case of Ray Bradbury's "The Jar"). What resulted from these rules, and from the master of suspense's indubitable presence as host, was nothing short of a television classic.

*Alfred Hitchcock Presents* began on CBS in 1955, switched to NBC for the 1960-61 season, and then went back to CBS (as the elongated *Alfred Hitchcock Hour*) before finally returning to NBC to complete its ten-year run on the air. In the process of all this channel hopping, *Alfred Hitchcock Presents* dramatized short stories by Ray Bradbury, Roald Dahl, Harlan Ellison, Robert Bloch, Frederic Brown, and other greats. Many now famous directors, including Robert Altman, William Friedkin, and Sidney Pollack, jump-started their careers by helming episodes of this black-and-white series. In all, *Alfred Hitchcock Presents* won two Emmy Awards and was nominated for eight more before leaving our television screens for rerun oblivion.

Historically speaking, *Alfred Hitchcock Presents* is important not merely because it came along early and lasted for ten years (last broadcast: May 10, 1965) and 266 episodes (with an additional 93 as *The Alfred Hitchcock Hour*), but because it represents an early crossover with the world of feature films. Alfred Hitchcock was a very popular and acclaimed director during production of the series, and his decision to produce a TV venture was quite significant. At least tacitly, this decision indicated to audiences and skeptics alike that TV could be about more than selling detergent or soap. Perhaps more importantly, Hitchcock, as executive producer, host, and frequent director, took the networks and sponsors head on with his scathing on-the-air criticisms. Daringly, his choice of stories often ended with the bad people victorious, which was something of a surprise 35 to 40 years ago. Hitchcock's introductory passages were also downright sarcastic, permissible only because the man was something of an icon. Television audiences of the day ate this material up, and enjoyed Hitchcock's dry humor. With great casts, excellent direction, and even feature-film quality music (courtesy of Bernard Hermann, Frederick Herbert, and Lynn Murray), the series was a powerhouse production in virtually every respect. Indeed, it was out of *Alfred Hitchcock Presents* personnel and experience that Hitchcock created *Psycho*, arguably his most famous and most successful production.

Twenty years after the demise of the original *Alfred Hitchcock Presents* and five full years after the death of Hitchcock himself, the classic series was revived for NBC TV. The reasons for this exhumation were numerous. First, theatrical reissues of Hitchcock favorites *Vertigo*, *Rear Window*, and *Rope* were making headlines, generating renewed interest in the director, and even turning a tidy little profit. Secondly, 1985 was to be the year of the anthology revival. CBS had the new *Twilight Zone* (with Phil DeGuere and Harlan Ellison at the helm) and blockbuster movie wunderkind Steven Spielberg had received a 44-episode commitment for his own "original" genre anthology, *Amazing Stories*. Laurel's *Tales from the Darkside* had already done well in the syndication market, and *The Hitchhiker* was HBO's most popular series. Considering the success of these various anthologies, plus

the already scheduled new competition, *Alfred Hitchcock Presents* was deemed a perfect property to resuscitate. And besides having the good fortune to be an anthology in the year when anthologies were the rage again, it also followed on the heels of several TV series revival films such as *Gilligan's Island* and *I Dream of Jeannie*.

Although *Alfred Hitchcock Presents* was originally brought back to life as a TV movie consisting of four stories, NBC director of motion pictures and TV Allen Sabinson saw potential for far more than one or two anthology telefilms per year. What resulted was a new series that would come to be scheduled after *Amazing Stories* on Sunday nights at 8:30 P.M.

Behind the scenes on the *Hitchcock* revival was producer Christopher Crowe, the man responsible for the unsuccessful anthology series *Darkroom* (1981) with host James Coburn, and the unsuccessful anthology film *Nightmares* (1983) starring Lance Henriksen and Emilio Estevez. Early on, Crowe announced his intentions to spruce up the Hitchcock series:

Tampering with the Gods could get us into trouble. But we haven't gone into it blithely. We don't want to be accused of picking the bones of a dead man. We did not want to make a simple clone of the originals.... We wanted to open them up, update them, and make them more cinematic.<sup>1</sup>

Everything looked good on paper, and Crowe recruited the likes of Tim Burton and Danny Elfman to direct and score the new series. Though it was suggested that Brian DePalma, John Milius, and Michael Crichton would also be involved in some capacity, their projects on *Alfred Hitchcock Presents* never materialized. However, in a nice bow to history, the first episode of the new *Alfred Hitchcock Presents* was a remake of "Revenge," the very first episode of the original series (aired October 2, 1955). A more controversial move was the decision to include colorized Hitchcock introductions from the first series. These introductions by a dead man failed to connect with audiences because they were too general, often having little or no connection with the story being broadcast. And the thinly veiled barbs at sponsors no longer seemed timely, let alone revolutionary. This was a different time, and Hitchcock's jokes mostly fell flat in the '80s, seeming more tame and "shticky" than daring.

Also, Crowe's version of the anthology series relied a bit too heavily on remakes. Those viewers familiar with the old stories found very little in the way of surprises or irony in these "new" proceedings, despite the presence of actors and actresses like Melanie Griffith ("Man from the South"), Barbara Hershey ("Wake Me When I'm Dead"), Martin Sheen ("The Method Actor"), Andy Garcia ("Breakdown"), Yaphet Kotto ("Prisoners"), Karen Allen ("The Creeper"), Jeff Fahey ("Enough Rope for Two") and Ronny Cox ("Road Hog"). Obviously, Crowe believed he was improving a classic by reinventing these old shows, but remakes seldom rise to the level of the original art. To wit, Crow reported:

We're going through all the old episodes and I think the preponderance would die today. Most of them were quite cerebral and sedentary. We try to find stories that are more visceral than cerebral. Also, the audience has changed, so we have to contemporize the stories.<sup>2</sup>

To some extent this is an arrogant comment. A necessary quality of any artistic piece, whether it be on film, television, or canvas, is that it speak to more than one generation, that it is timeless, so-to-speak. The original *Alfred Hitchcock*, though set in the '50s and '60s, zeroed in on the human condition, which is more than "visceral" enough for the audiences of today to identify with. The modernizing,



the updating, of these stories came mostly in using more explicit language, showing more violence, and in reflecting a 1980s worldview instead of a '50s one. Yet, in the “contemporizing” of the stories, some things were clearly missing. The photography (in color instead of black-and-white this time around) was far less stylish, the writing was more pedestrian, and the plots seemed far less bold, even with Crowe’s heavy contextual updating. Audiences familiar with what had gone before could make only invidious comparisons to the great work of directors like Lloyd Nolan, Don Taylor, and Hitchcock himself.

Because of these failings, and because *Amazing Stories* proved to be a lousy lead in, the new *Alfred Hitchcock Presents* failed in the ratings and was regularly trounced by its competition, *Murder, She Wrote*. It was canceled by NBC after just more than 20 episodes aired.

That would have been and perhaps should have been the end of the story for the “new” and ill-advised *Alfred Hitchcock Presents* remake. Instead, something truly dreadful occurred: the series was purchased by the USA Network on cable and revived yet again. This was the era when cable networks were looking to attract big audiences with instantly identifiable “brand name” shows such as *Swamp Thing*, and *Alfred Hitchcock Presents* fit the same “brand name” bill. It was a half-hour instead of an hour, could be produced cheaply and then run side-by-side with the more expensive, better-cast NBC show of 1985-86. Produced entirely in Canada (to cut costs), the newer *Alfred Hitchcock Presents* was produced, sans Christopher Crowe, by the same team responsible for the USA Network versions of HBO cast-offs *The Hitchhiker* and *The Ray Bradbury Theater*. Whatever distinction *Alfred Hitchcock Presents* had held onto as part of the NBC network schedule was now gone and “cheap” was the name of the game. Fewer big name stars, no remakes, and a crew/creative staff split between assignments on *The Hitchhiker*, *Alfred Hitchcock Presents*, and *The Ray Bradbury Theater* produced not just one, but three anonymous-looking, almost interchangeable series. As for *Hitchcock*, it now bore no resemblance (quality-wise) to the great 1950s-60s original.

*Alfred Hitchcock Presents* aired on USA at 10:00 P.M. on Saturday evenings as part of the “Saturday Nightmares” schedule block during the late '80s, where it served as the lead-in for the similarly USA-revived *Ray Bradbury Theater*. Before it finished, this Canadian-mounted *Hitchcock* featured guest performances by a number of out-of-work genre veterans including John Colicos (*Battlestar Galactica*), Martin Landau (*Space: 1999*), Lindsay Wagner (*The Bionic Woman*), Geraint Wyn-Davies (*Airwolf*, *Forever Knight*), Pamela Sue Martin (*The Hardy Boys/Nancy Drew Mysteries* [1976]), Dirk Benedict (*Battlestar Galactica*), Patrick Macnee (*The Avengers*), George Lazenby (*On Her Majesty's Secret Service*), Mark Hamill (*Star Wars*), William Katt (*The Greatest American Hero* [1980-82]), Page Fletcher (*The Hitchhiker*) and Parker Stevenson (*Probe* [1988]). Though it was a pleasure to see these old friends back in action, one can always wish the return had been in the service of better stories.

*Alfred Hitchcock Presents* was eventually canceled after 60 or so “new” cable installments were produced quickly, cheaply, and in wholly workman fashion. It has since been rerun on the Sci-Fi Channel many times. Christopher Crowe, who had wisely stayed away from the cable monstrosity remake of his own remake, later found fame of a sort by creating the cult science fiction series *Seven Days* for UPN. One interesting side-note: Robert Altman, who had once directed the original *Alfred Hitchcock Presents*, returned to the anthology format in 1998 with the short-lived program *Gun*. It fared badly, and disappeared from the network schedule after just three airings. Nonetheless, *Gun* demonstrated that Hitchcock’s disciples had not forgotten his series, and that his original show still

had an impact on the next generation.

Why did the new *Alfred Hitchcock Presents* fail artistically in 1985? Norman Lloyd, who worked with Hitchcock on the film *Saboteur* and the original *Alfred Hitchcock Presents* series, had this comment regarding these efforts to raise the dead:

They're remaking everything of his now.... And they'll never "capture" it. Like the new *Psycho*.... They'll never get it the way he got it. They'll never get anything the way he got it. Because what he had was something "between the lines".... It was an overtone ... something in the way he saw things. And his pictures were done with great *simplicity* at times. Not only did Hitch have a great cinematic gift ... but he had a gift of simplicity.<sup>3</sup>

The original *Alfred Hitchcock Presents* captured the spirit of Hitchcock the man, the remakes on NBC and USA did not. Neither update was "terrible" per se, just rather average TV fare. But considering their fine heritage, that fact was a disappointment.

### CRITICAL COMMENTARY

Over and above all the technique and style he brought to his feature films and television episodes, Alfred Hitchcock was an astute student of human nature. The terror and suspense generated from his productions inevitably arise from some incipient human failing or emotion, whether it be schizophrenia, kleptomania, a fear of heights, or even temporary paralysis. His characters are driven by very human impulses: the impulse to follow love/lust to its most illogical and impractical extreme (*The Birds* [1962]), the impulse to get rich through the theft of money (*Psycho* [1960]) or even the impulse to discover the truth and in the process save one's own life (*North by Northwest* [1959]). The best episodes of the original *Alfred Hitchcock Presents*, like his most memorable films, share some aspect of human nature with the audience and then dramatize how it leads either to a tragic downfall or to a surprising victory. Who can forget "Lamb to the Slaughter" (by Roald Dahl), in which a woman, having murdered her husband, serves the murder weapon (a leg of lamb) to the cops investigating the crime? Ingenuity was the human characteristic touched on there—ingenuity, inspiration, insanity ... and not a little bit of luck. By taking the recognizable within all of us and exaggerating it for comic, suspenseful, and terrifying effect, Hitchcock was able to make audiences gasp, squirm, and quiver. His most famous remark, perhaps, is that he enjoyed playing his audience "like a piano." The original *Hitchcock* series more often than not remembered and lived up to that quote from the master. It often created high suspense and drama from limited means and taut but elegantly simply scripts.

NBC's 1985 revival and the USA follow up versions of *Alfred Hitchcock Presents* are not even in the same ballpark. Each version reduces a viewer's involvement with the story at hand by making the guest characters behave in a mean-spirited and crass manner so that their comeuppance at the end seems "deserved." Worse, almost every story on these "new" series hinge on a surprise, twist ending. This is a mistake in conception, because so many of these stories are remakes and the so-called surprises are well known, even legendary. If this (remake) is a show designed for the under-20 demographic, fine, but any audience (or critic) with a knowledge of history will realize he is being served warmed-up reruns. For every 1980s *Alfred Hitchcock Presents* story that seems really well-done, there is an antecedent. The remake, "Man from the South" is done extraordinarily well for instance, with John Huston playing a compulsive gambler in Las Vegas who makes a scary wager with playboy Steven Bauer. If Bauer can successfully activate his cigarette lighter ten times in a row, he

will win a brand new convertible car. If not, Huston will chop off Bauer's little finger with a giant meat cleaver and add it to his collectors' box ... which is filled with fingers. Sounds like an exciting opportunity for a bit of suspense, doesn't it? It is, as that lighter spits out a flame in intense close-up after intense close-up and sweat starts to form on Bauer's forehead and fingers. Yet who can totally forget the image of Peter Lorre and Steve McQueen going through similar paces back in 1960? The point is this: these are good stories, but *familiar* stories. Conversely, they are so familiar *because* they are so good. After the initial airing, people discussed these stories and the episodes themselves grew into something akin to urban legends. Like episodes of *The Twilight Zone* and *The Outer Limits*, people will inevitably start a conversation about *Alfred Hitchcock Presents* with the words: "Do you remember that one when...." After that intro, fill in the blanks at your leisure. Remember the one about the gambler and the lighter? Remember the one about the jerk who wouldn't let a car by him on the highway, and then pays the price ("Road Hog")? How about the one where a woman thinks she sees her attacker and her husband kills him, only to discover that she has made a mistake and is fingering *another* man ("Revenge")? Or how about that one with the jar that seems to mesmerize people ("The Jar")? The NBC *Alfred Hitchcock Presents* is like a Remco greatest hits album where unfamiliar artists sing all your favorite songs. Somehow, somehow, it just is not quite right, it isn't quite the same. The notes are the same (or close to the same) but the feeling is different. For any story, the second time around, inevitably, is not going to seem as exciting as the first. Add to that, *Alfred Hitchcock Presents* (the remake) has to contend not only with ten years of original stories, but five years of *Twilight Zone* episodes, two years of *Thriller* episodes, two years of *The Outer Limits*, three years of *One Step Beyond*, three years of *Rod Serling's Night Gallery*, a year of *Ghost Story*, a year of *The Evil Touch*, a half year of *Darkroom* and *Quinn Martin's Tales of the Unexpected* plus a new *Twilight Zone*, *The Hitchhiker*, *Amazing Stories*, and *Tales from the Darkside*. In other words, its window of opportunity to tell new and interesting stories is extremely narrow even if it were not hellbent on reproducing the stories of a classic show.

There is an ugly side to the new *Alfred Hitchcock Presents* as well. Although Hitchcock has been accused of being a misogynist and exploiter of women, the NBC version had its own ghosts to contend with. Where Hitchcock had used human frailty to his advantage (greed, jealousy, hubris, what-have-you, breeds suspense, terror, and revenge), the NBC show often tried to generate scares by playing to the audience's worst stereotypes. There is a subtle but important difference worth noting here. Hitchcock manipulated the universal human condition to generate audience identification, and then wove in the horrific or suspenseful aspects of the tale once that reality/identification had been ruthlessly established. The new show pandered to the ugliest instincts in its audience instead.

For instance, "The Creeper" is the story of a woman who discovers that a serial killer called the Creeper is strangling people in her inner city neighborhood. The episode attempts to bolster its suspense by starting things off with star Karen Allen alone on a metropolitan bus at night. All around her are ethnic faces (Puerto Rican and African American, specifically). As she gets off the bus, a beady-eyed Hispanic pursues her through the night, and again, the audience is supposed to be frightened by this happening. The image is an old and, in this day and age, an irresponsible one: a white woman pursued at night by a villainous ethnic man who means her implied sexual/physical harm. This idea should strike fear into any God-fearing white suburbanite, right? The problem is, it is not just irresponsible, but actually hateful for an entertainment (on Sunday night, of all times) to resort to the bigoted impulses of an audience solely to generate scares. As "The Creeper" does not even concern a minority serial killer (the Hispanic just wanted to return a book that Karen Allen had left on the bus by accident), *Alfred Hitchcock* even acknowledges what it is doing here: it is having a

fun scare at our expense, using racial prejudice as the motivating factor. “Bigotry” may be a universal condition (let’s hope not), but *Alfred Hitchcock Presents* was willfully trying to engender it in *us* for a cheap jolt, and that is unforgivable. It may just be the show’s era, the conservative Reagan ’80s, which results in this kind of thing, but today it seems very ill advised.

“Night Caller” starring a young Linda Fiorentino is not much better. On the surface, this story is about a woman terrorized by someone on the telephone. The mysterious caller claims he is watching her every move, and she starts to grow paranoid about the stalker. She has just been divorced, you see, and she is living on her own for the first time, supporting herself for the first time as well. The policemen are no help, of course. One of them even says to her: “You want to be independent, you want to live alone, you want to act like a man—then buy a gun.” Clearly, the not-very-hidden subtext here is a hostility and resentment towards women. The writing suggests male frustration with females who don’t do as they’re told and behave by the traditional rules. “Night Caller” also intimates that a beautiful woman cannot be trusted to protect herself or act rationally without the support/guidance of a dominant male. Again, this author hates to get near anything approximating a feminist high horse, but sometimes these 1980s horror TV shows are just so blatantly sexist, it is worse to be accused of being an advocate for a special interest than to remain silent while old stereotypes are reinforced and trotted out. This kind of attitude may have passed on the ’50s version of *Hitchcock*, but it is absolutely bizarre to see it in play in a modern series. Why wasn’t this attitude contemporized?

The NBC version of *Alfred Hitchcock Presents* falls into two distinct categories of quality: the remakes that work well, but are overfamiliar (“The Jar,” “Breakdown,” “Man from the South,” “Road Hog”), and those that fail totally. One such failure is “Enough Rope for Two,” a story which features a yuppie Harvard Law School applicant going head-to-head with a white-trash redneck, Ray Lee Dick, over a stash of money. It is a hackneyed story of betrayal, shifting loyalties, fear of being caught, and the implicit argument that it is worth it to “win” if you come out of the game with more money than when you entered. There are no likable characters, and in the end everybody dies. These are the easiest kind of stories for lazy writers to concoct. They must simply create characters who are so ugly, so exaggerated, that the audience will be rooting for all of them to die. Then, the writer must simply set the characters against each other in a few clashes, and it passes for irony or justice when all the dramatis personae end up dead because of their misbehavior. “Enough Rope For Two” is not so much an essay about human nature as it is an example of two-dimensional writing.

The USA version of *Alfred Hitchcock Presents* is not even that good. Its roster of episodes includes one stinker after the other, to the point that *Alfred Hitchcock Presents* has actually become interchangeable with *The Hitchhiker*. In this cable revamp of a once great show, the importance of the final twist is upped dramatically. Everything else, from character motivation to storyline, is ultimately sacrificed to provide a “shock” climax. Take the drama “Initiation” for example. In this USA tale, a college housemother (Marion Ross) comes home to her fraternity to see a college boy fall from a high roof. She panics when she believes him dead. Of course, he is just kidding ... he landed on a cushion. For revenge, the housemother stages her own death as a practical joke. Not surprisingly, things do not end quite as she plans and a real death results. The problem with this story, and others in the USA canon, is that decisions made by the dramatis personae seem to make no sense, and are often contradictory. Why, for instance, would a college-employed housemother who was so terribly upset by a practical joke set up a similar practical joke of her own after giving a lecture about how rotten they are? Secondly, her joke involves the ritual humiliation of her own son (a nerd who pretends to pledge the fraternity), the use of blanks *and* real bullets together in a loaded pistol (which must be fired in the

proper sequence and at the right targets for the con to work) and other complex props such as stage blood, and makeup. Overlooking the contradiction that a nice woman who dislikes practical jokes would allow her only son to be involved in a dangerous practical joke himself, the story begs the question: Why? Why would she do it? Why take chances with a loaded gun? Would a woman who just warned a boy about practical jokes then turn around and come up with one that is many, many times more dangerous? Add to those problems an *Animal House* cliché view of fraternity life, and one can see where the USA series went seriously wrong in the storytelling.

“Prism” is another USA story which reveals faulty plotting. In this installment, a cop (Michael Sarrazin) investigates the murder of a man who was found dead in his home by his wife (Lindsay Wagner). As he investigates, the cop comes to learn that the wife actually has multiple personalities, and that one of them is responsible for the murder. The twist in this tale is that the cop knew about the culprit all along (but did not share it with the audience or his co-workers) because one of those multiple personalities happened to be his very own girlfriend! If this story is dissected in any meaningful fashion, one realizes immediately that it makes no sense. Lindsay Wagner plays Susan, Gypsy, Stella, Susi, and the cop’s girlfriend, all facets of one human being. She leads five different lives (and has almost as many careers: as an aerobics instructor, as a stripper, as a housewife, and as a seamstress). Yet nobody at her job, nobody in her neighborhood, no one (except her dead husband) realizes that she has multiple personality disorder. Where do Susi, Gypsy, Stella, and the girlfriend receive mail? Where do they receive phone calls? Where do their paychecks go? What cars do they drive? How did they get licenses? The notion that one married woman can compartmentalize her life to the point that she can carry on five individual identities without some crossover/slippage is ridiculous at best. Do any of these alternate personalities have an apartment? Who pays the rent? Would not the cops have found the clothes of the stripper personality side-by-side with the clothes of the housewife personality since there does not seem to be another residence? This is a story that can exist only for a half-hour because if it lasted any longer than that, people would realize immediately that the premise is ludicrous.

Sometimes on the USA Network version of *Alfred Hitchcock Presents*, the writers really do go for broke and come up with a winner out of sheer audacity and seeming desperation. One such occasion is the episode “Career Move” in which a down-and-out rock star (David Cassidy) plans his own demise when his records stop selling well. His agent and wife plan to kill him now that he is “officially dead,” and then steal his share of the royalties. But then the rock star survives the murder attempt ... but then a crazed fan thinks the rock star’s an impostor and must be killed for imitating a “God” ... but then the rock star’s wife is implicated in the fans’ actions ... and so on. This is one episode that telegraphed its first twist, but then came up with an additional two or three more, just for kicks. The casting also worked for the show since Cassidy is himself a faded kind of rock star in need of a comeback. The only time the episode fails to convince is when Cassidy is on stage at a supposedly gigantic concert. He is seen only in close-ups and close-shots while stock footage of screaming crowds in a magnificent coliseum is edited into the proceedings. However, a production problem like that, arising from cost necessities, is easily overlooked when a fun and surprising story is highlighted. If the rest of the USA shows had been possessed of such nutty inspiration and fast pacing, the series might have looked very different.

The longer the USA version of *Alfred Hitchcock Presents* stayed in production, the more it teetered on parody and broke the rules of the original series. “The Man Who Knew Too Little” and “South by Southeast” were comedy variations on some of Hitchcock’s favorite themes. “Night Creatures”

resorted to the introduction of vampires (a taboo on the original series), and “My Dear Watson” was a Sherlock Holmes story. “Diamonds Aren’t Forever” was a Bond pastiche starring former James Bond actor George Lazenby (who had already re-created the role in 1983’s *The Return of the Man from U.N.C.L.E.*). The tongue-in-cheek attitude and dips into the supernatural well usually seemed woefully out of place on a series that was supposed to be from the beloved master of suspense.

Another interesting sidenote: one of the directors of the USA episodes, Atom Egoyan, went on to become the director of an acclaimed 1998 motion picture entitled *The Sweet Hereafter*. He cut his teeth on this series, and *Friday the 13th: The Series* as well. So at least *one* good thing did come out of the *Hitchcock* transition to cable.

One obnoxious thing which critics often do is highlight or bolster the old at the expense of the new. They’ll tell you that the old *Psycho* was better than the new one, that the old *King Kong* was better than the new one, that the old *Godzilla* was better than the new one, that the old *Star Trek*, *Twilight Zone*, *Outer Limits* and so forth are all better than their follow-ups. This is a particularly irritating habit which belies “old man thinking,” because young fans who are first introduced to a series or concept through the follow-up inevitably like it better than the old stuff. Kids of the ’70s prefer Roger Moore to Sean Connery because they grew up with him as James Bond, even though virtually every critic in the country will insist that Sean Connery was better in the role. So it might really just come down to timing and preferences. In point of fact, however, this author does prefer the old *Psycho*, *King Kong*, *Godzilla*, *Star Trek*, *Twilight Zone*, and *Outer Limits* to the new remakes. And there are good reasons for those choices. He also prefers the old *Alfred Hitchcock Presents*. Here is the reason why: color, vulgarity, and increased violence do not improve this series in the manner that new special effects help to improve a series like *Star Trek: The Next Generation* (which, at least in part, concerns future technology) or *Godzilla* (1998), wherein the better the monster looked and moved, the better the picture. Wit, irony, and humanity were always *Alfred Hitchcock Presents*’ greatest gifts to its audience, and larger budgets, ’80s performers and directors, and even better production values do nothing to improve on what the original show managed best. Is the new *Alfred Hitchcock Presents* well-produced and occasionally quite suspenseful? Yes. Is it original and innovative? No. Not at all.

However, if the new *Alfred Hitchcock Presents* serves to introduce a young generation to the work of one of Hollywood’s greatest and most celebrated filmmakers (and the antecedent of John Carpenter, Brian DePalma, and Francis Ford Coppola) then perhaps originality and innovation are not really quite as important as this review might suggest. For those under 20, then, *Alfred Hitchcock Presents* (NBC) version warrants a guarded but ultimately positive review for creating a curiosity in the master’s work. For the older set, reruns of the original would be a better way to go. In fact, the younger set should watch the reruns too.

### **CAST AND CREDITS:**

*Cast:* Alfred Hitchcock (deceased) (Your Host).

*Credits:* *Supervising Producer:* Andrew Mirisch. *Producer:* Alan Barnett. *Executive Producer:* Christopher Crowe; *Music (various episodes):* Steve Bartek, Michael Colombier, Mason Daring, Danny Elfman, Thomas Newman, Nicholas Pike, Basil Poledouris. *Associate Producer:* Daniel Sackheim. *Directors of Photography (various episodes):* Mario DiLeo, Woody Omens, Thomas E. Spalding. *Art Director (various episodes):* Anthony Brockliss, Dennis Washington. *Editors (various episodes):* John Goux, Heather MacDougall, Randy Roberts, Parkie Singh, Scott Wallace. *Unit*

*Production Manager:* David Livingston. *First Assistant Director (various episodes):* Jan DeWitt, Richard Espinoza, Jerry Ketcham, Doug Metzger. *Second Assistant Director (various episodes):* Carla McCloskey, Steven Southard, Lonnie Steinberg. *Casting:* Mark Malis. *Set Decorator (various episodes):* Catherine Arnold, Victoria Hugo, Mary Ann Brienza. *Sound (various episodes):* Jim Alexander, Hank Garfield. *Costume Designer (various episodes):* Sharon Day, Sheila A. Hite, Tom Johnson, Steven Sharp, Julie Weiss. *Production Designers (various episodes):* Bill Malley, Dean Edward Mitzner. *Sound Editors (various episodes):* Robert Biggart, Ian MacGregor Scott, Burness J. Speakman. *Music Editors (various episodes):* Robert Mayer, Dino A. Moriana. *Story Editors:* David Stenn, Steve Bello. *Color:* Technicolor. *Titles and Optical Effects:* Universal Title. *Panaflex, Cameras and Lenses:* Panavision.

## EPISODE GUIDE

### • *Telefilm*

*Alfred Hitchcock Presents:* four installments, detailed below, later syndicated as individual half-hour episodes.

**A. “Incident in a Small Jail”** Written by Joel Oliansky; Based on a story by Henry Slesar; Directed by Joel Oliansky; airdate: May 5, 1985; *Guest Cast:* Ned Beatty; Lee Ving (Venner); Tony Frank (Sherriff); John Shearin; Richard Lineback; Cynthia Hartley,

When salesman Larry Broom picks up a hitchhiker, he becomes involved in mistaken identity, murder, rape, and small-town lynch-mob “justice.”

*Note:* This installment is a remake of “Incident in a Small Jail” directed by Norman Lloyd, which aired on the original *Alfred Hitchcock Presents* on March 26, 1961.

**B. “Man from the South”** Written by Steve DeJarnatt; Based on a teleplay by William Fay; From a story by Roald Dahl; directed by Steve DeJarnatt; airdate: May 5, 1985; *Guest Cast:* John Huston (Carlos); Melanie Griffith; Steven Bauer; Tippi Hedren (Waitress); Kim Novak (Merosa); Jack Thibau (Ironson); Danny De La Paz (Bellhop).

In Las Vegas, two strangers are approached by a gambler with a strange proposition. He will hand over his brand new car if the young man’s lighter will strike ten times in a row. If the lighter doesn’t strike, the young man will forfeit the little finger on his left hand.

*Note:* This installment is based on the episode “Man from the South,” directed by Norman Lloyd, which aired on the original *Alfred Hitchcock Presents* on January 10, 1960.

**C. “Bang, You’re Dead!”** Written by Christopher Crowe; Based on the short story by Harold Swanton and the teleplay by Margery Vosper; Directed by Randa Haines; airdate: May 5, 1985; *Guest Cast:* Bianca Rose (Amanda); Lyman Ward (Uncle Jack); Gail Young (Amanda’s Mother); Bill Mumy; Jonathan Goldsmith; David Held.

A young girl who is not permitted to play “army” with the boys is certain she will be accepted if she brings along her own gun. Unfortunately, she does just that, and ends up touring the town with her uncle’s revolver in hand.

*Note:* This installment is based on the episode “Bang, You’re Dead!” directed by Alfred Hitchcock, which aired on the original *Alfred Hitchcock Presents* on October 10, 1961.

**D. “An Unlocked Window”** Written by Fred Walton; From a story by Ethel Lina White and a teleplay by James Bridges; Directed by Fred Walton; airdate: May 5, 1985; *Guest Cast:* Annette O’Toole; Bruce Davison; Helena Kallianiotis; Owen Buch; Ross Elliott; Nancy Burnett.

Two nurses weather a ferocious storm in the home of a terminal patient, aware that a maniac strangler is on the loose in the city. Although the nurses take proper precautions, the murderer finds a way inside the house to claim another victim.

*Note:* This installment is based on the episode “An Unlocked Window,” directed by Joseph M. Newman, which aired on the original *Alfred Hitchcock Presents* on February 15, 1965.

• *Series Episodes: First Season (NBC, 1985–1986)*

**1. “Revenge”** Written by David Stenn; From a story by Samuel Blas; Directed by R.E. Young; airdate: September 29, 1985; *Guest Cast:* Linda Purl (Lisa Tate); David Clennon (John Tate); Herbert Jefferson, Jr. (Police Officer); Frances Lee McCain (Dr. Marianne Campbell); Beth Miller (Cindy); Victoria Ann Lewis (Receptionist); Angela Moya (Nurse); Dennon Rawles (Male Dance Instructor); Bill Dearth (Mailman); Courtenay McWhinney (Bag Lady); Fred Taylor (Biker).

A young dancer left traumatized by a rape in her new home unexpectedly spots her attacker while riding home from the hospital with her husband, a professor at Pepperdine. The husband kills her rapist, only to have her finger another man as her rapist, then another, then another.

*Note:* This installment is based on the story “Revenge” by Samuel Blas and the teleplay by A.I. Bezzerides and Francis Cockrell, directed by Alfred Hitchcock, which aired on the original *Alfred Hitchcock Presents* on October 2, 1955.

**2. “Night Fever”** Written by Gilbert Ralston; From a story by Clark Howard; Directed by Jeff Kanew; airdate: October 6, 1985; *Guest Cast:* Robert Carradine (Jerry); Debbie Richter (Kathy); Lisa Pelikan (Ellen); James Hinton (Tom); Tim Cunningham (Phil); Basil Hoffman (Dr. Michaels); Richard Foronjy (Detective Martinez); Roger Aaron Brown (Joe Chandler); Eugene Betler (Detective Creeley); Ken Foree (Orderly); Jeanne Mori (Physician); Christopher Crowe (Surgeon); James Saito, Wendy Oates (Anesthesiologists); Charles Bazaldua, Jerry Boyd (Ambulance Attendants).

A convenience store robbery goes badly for Jerry, and he is injured during a shoot out with police officers. Jerry and a wounded cop are rushed to the hospital, but the cop dies, leaving Jerry to attempt to sweet talk a seemingly naive nurse into letting him escape.

*Note:* This installment is based on a story “Night Fever” by Clark Howard and a teleplay by Gilbert Ralston, directed by Herbert Coleman, which aired on the original *Alfred Hitchcock Presents* on May 3, 1965.

**3. “Wake Me When I’m Dead”** Written by Buck Henry and Irving Elman; From a story by Lawrence Treat; Directed by Frank Pierson; airdate: October 20, 1985; *Guest Cast:* Buck Henry (Walter Lang); Barbara Hershey (Jessie Dean); Brian Bedford (Stewart Dean); George Innes (Charles Dean); Reid Shelton (Daniels); Carolyn Seymour (Carla Dean); Gill Denis (Dr. Borovsky).



A web of murder and deceit is weaved when a hypnotist very publicly regresses a subject to a past life. When his subject, newlywed Carla Dean, kills her husband in that regressed state, she is tried for murder ... but found not guilty based on the hypnotism.

*Note:* This installment is based on “Murder Me Twice,” an original *Alfred Hitchcock Presents* episode based on a story by Lawrence Treat, with a teleplay by Irving Elman, directed by David Swift, which aired on December 7, 1958.

**4. “Final Escape”** Written by Charles Grant Craig; Story by Thomas H. Cannon Jr., and Randall Hood; Directed by Thomas Carter; airdate: October 27, 1985; *Guest Cast:* Season Hubley (Lena Trent); Davis Roberts (Doc); Jerry Hardin (Warden); Linden Chiles (Judge); Patrice Donnelly (Shirley); Anne Seymour (Esther).

A woman convicted of murder is desperate to escape from prison, and so concocts what she believes is the perfect plan. The next time the prison bell rings, it will mean an inmate has died, and that the convict, Lena, can slip into the coffin and get out of the prison. Unfortunately, she will be buried alive for a brief time, before her contact can dig up her body. Lena goes through with the plan, but finds that her contact is not where she expected him to be.

*Note:* This episode is based on “Final Escape,” an original *Alfred Hitchcock Presents* episode penned by John Risko based on the story by Cannon and Hood, and directed by William Witney, which aired on February 21, 1964.

**5. “Night Caller”** Written by John Byrum; From a story by Gabrielle Upton; Directed by John Byrum; airdate: November 5, 1985; *Guest Cast:* Linda Fiorentino (Betsy Van Kennon); Michael O’Keefe (Art Toomey); Tony Bill (Steve); Steven Davies (Detective Duane Calvin); Sandra Bernhard (Karen).

A professional woman living alone in a bad neighborhood is terrorized by a voyeur who telephones her at home and on the job. Unfortunately, Betsy is not sure if the voyeur is her new boyfriend, the ex-marine who lives across the street, or the marina cop who seems to object to her independent lifestyle.

*Note:* This episode is based on “Night Caller,” an original *Alfred Hitchcock Presents* episode written by Robert Westerby and Gabrielle Upton and directed by Alf Kjellin, which aired January 31, 1964.

**6. “The Method Actor”** Written by Bill Kerby; From a teleplay by Robert Bloch and a story by Max Franklin; Directed by Burt Reynolds; airdate: November 10, 1985; *Guest Cast:* Martin Sheen (Paul Dano); Parker Stevenson (Lane Richards); Robby Benson (Ed); Marilu Henner (Claire); Bernie Casey (Bernie).

A desperate, over-the-hill actor decides that murder is the only way to eliminate his competition for a part in a new film. Using a chainsaw, sulfuric acid, and his bathtub, the actor sets about to win the all-important part his own way.

*Note:* Based on the original *Alfred Hitchcock* episode “Bad Actor” written by Robert Bloch, from a story by Max Franklin, and directed by John Newland (*One Step Beyond*), which aired January 9, 1962.

**7. “The Human Interest Story”** Written by Karen Harris; From a story by Fredric Brown; Directed

by Larry Gross; airdate: November 17, 1985; *Guest Cast*: Barbara Williams (Maggie Verona); John Shea (Brian Whitman); Richard Marcus (Levy); James Callahan (Everett); Rhonda Dotson (Denise).

The aliens are coming, and they plan to colonize the Earth and destroy all individuality. All this information comes to a newspaper reporter Maggie Verona through an average guy named Brian Whitman, who claims to be possessed by a benevolent alien life form.

*Note*: Based on the original *Alfred Hitchcock* episode “The Human Interest Story” starring Steve McQueen, written by Frederic Brown, directed by William Nolan.

**8. “Breakdown”** Written by Alfonse M. Ruggiero Jr., and David Stenn; From a story by Louis Pollack; Directed by Richard Pearce; airdate: December 1, 1985; *Guest Cast*: John Heard (William); Andy Garcia (Alejandro); Stefan Gierasch (Shuller); Wally Barron (Doctor); Al Israel (Coroner); Manuel Ojeda (General).

An American businessman flies to South America to close a drug deal. Once there, he is injured in a car accident and left for dead by the authorities, but somehow he must let it be known that he is alive.

*Note*: This installment is a remake of the episode “Breakdown,” written by Francis Cockrell, based on a story by Louis Pollack, directed by Alfred Hitchcock, and starring Joseph Cotten, which originally aired on November 13, 1955.

**9. “Prisoners”** Written by John Byrum; Directed by Christopher Crowe; airdate: December 8, 1985; *Guest Cast*: Christina Rains (Julia); Yaphet Kotto (Jack); Larry McCormick, Doug Hale, Steve Eastin.

A woman is accosted by an escaped convict in her home. After a day long tête-à-tête, both the prisoner and the housewife learn that they share something in common: they are both in self-made cages.

**10. “Gigolo” (aka “Arthur”)** Written by Steve De Jarnatt; From a story by Arthur Williams; Directed by Thomas Carter; airdate: December 15, 1985; *Guest Cast*: Brad Davis (Arthur); Sandy Dennis (Sylvia); Ray Sharkey, Virginia Capers.

A young man marries a wealthy woman and plots to murder her. Her cat, of all things, insures that justice is served.

*Note*: This episode is a remake of “Arthur,” written by James P. Cavanaugh, from a story by Arthur Williams, directed by Alfred Hitchcock, and starring Patrick Macnee, which first aired on *Alfred Hitchcock Presents* on September 27, 1959.

**11. “The Gloating Place”** Written by David Stenn; From a story by Robert Bloch; Directed by Christopher Leitch; airdate: January 5, 1986; *Guest Cast*: Isabelle Walker (Samantha); Stephen Macht (Carl); Christie Houser (Debbie); Nicholas Hormann (Loomis); Cindy Pickett (Marcie Loomis); Kristy Swanson (Student).

A selfish girl tries to insert herself into a news story when she claims she was attacked by the same man who killed another girl. A newsman rushes immediately to the scene to document her story, but he has a secret of his own.

*Note*: Another remake. This one of the episode penned by Robert Bloch, directed by Alan Crosland,

starring *Lost in Space*'s Marta Kristen, which aired on May 16, 1961.

**12. "The Right Kind of Medicine"** Written by Michael Braverman; From a story by Henry Slesar; Directed by Jerrold Freedman; airdate: January 12, 1986; *Guest Cast*: Jack Thibeu (Joe); Robert Prosky (Dr. Vogel); Michael C. Gwynne (Hollingshead); Lyle Talbot (Fletcher); Greg Finley, Jill Hill.

A murderer who has just been released from prison is injured on a fresh heist. In need of medicine, he is forced to contend with a very slow pharmacist who has a knack for getting things wrong.

*Note*: This is a remake of the *Alfred Hitchcock Presents* episode of the same name which starred Robert Redford, was directed by Alan Crosland, and aired on December 19, 1961.

**13. "Beast in View"** Written by Robert Glass; From a story by Margaret Miller; Directed by Michael Toshiyuki Uno; airdate: January 19, 1986; *Guest Cast*: Janet Eilber (Dr. McGregor); Cliff Potts (Roger); Mark Harris, Michele Marsh, Tom Atkins.

A psychiatrist and her new husband face terror when their message machine voices death threats from the good doctor's missing/presumed-dead husband. As it turns out, Marion has a secret life, and her new spouse is in more trouble than he realizes.

*Note*: A remake (again) of an original story, this time one directed by Joseph M. Newman, from a story by Margaret Miller which starred Kevin McCarthy and aired on March 20, 1964.

**14. "A Very Happy Ending"** Written by David Chase; From a story by Clark Howard; Directed by David Chase; airdate: February 16, 1986; *Guest Cast*: Leaf Phoenix (Pagie Fisher); Robert Loggia (Charlie); Myrna White (Martha); John Aprea (Fisher).

A deaf little kid witnesses a streetside murder on his birthday and plots to blackmail the hitman. He steals the assassin's belongings and arranges a surprising hit.

**15. "The Canary Sedan"** Written by Joan Tewkesbury; From a story by Ann Bridge; Directed by Joan Tewkesbury; airdate: March 1, 1986; *Guest Cast*: Kathleen Quinlan (Anne); Adelle Lutz (Lin); Peter Haskell (Paul); Ian Abercrombie (Doctor).

A woman visits her executive husband in China only to discover that he is embroiled in Chinese magic and involved with a strange mistress. The secret to ending the nightmare involves an Old Chinese ritual and a special festival.

*Note*: A remake of the episode which aired on June 15, 1958. It was written by Stirling Silliphant, based on a story by Ann Bridge, and directed by Robert Stevens. It starred Jessica Tandy and Murray Matheson.

**16. "Enough Rope for Two"** Written by David Chase; Based on a story by Clark Howard; Directed by David Chase; airdate: March 9, 1986; *Guest Cast*: Jeff Fahey (Ray Lee Dick); Darlann Fluegel (Zoe); Tim Daly (Scott Wexler); Charles Howerton (Highway Patrolman); Jonathan Hugger (Gas Station Counterman).

A writer in love with a beautiful artist is frustrated when she invites a crooked relative, Ray Lee Dick, to go on a camping excursion to a place called China Lake with them. En route, Ray kills a

convenience store clerk, and Scott learns that his girl Zoe and her “cousin” are in cahoots to recover some stolen loot.

*Note:* A remake of the Clark Howard story and Joel Murcott teleplay directed by Paul Henreid and aired on November 17, 1959. The original starred Steve Brodie, Steven Hill, and Jean Hagen.

**17. “The Creeper”** Written by Steve Bello and Stephen Kronish; Based on a teleplay by James Cavanaugh; From a story by James Ruscoll; Directed by Christopher Crowe; airdate: March 16, 1986; *Guest Cast:* Karen Allen (Jackie Foster); Timothy Carhart (Rick); Clyde Kusatsu (Cop); Lori Butler (Carol); Danny De La Paz (Latino); Susan Peretz (Neighbor); Sam Vlahos (The Creeper); Jack F. Crowe (Biker Mechanic); Fred Taylor (Seedy Guy); S.A. Griffin (Policeman #2); Frank Sheppard (Black Man); Kellyn Plasschaert (Receptionist); Tom Noga (Policeman #1); John Hayden (Cashier); Sonny Klein (Hot Dog Vendor).

A frightened woman rides the bus to her home at night, aware that a serial strangler called “the Creeper” has slain his sixth victim in her neighborhood. She suspects that a demanding boyfriend may be the murderer, so she has her locks changed ... but things aren’t what they seem.

*Note:* A remake of the June 17, 1956, episode starring Constance Forde and Harry Towne. It was based on a story by James Ruscoll, written by James Cavanaugh, and directed by Herschel Daugherty.

**18. “Happy Birthday”** Written by Frisco Miller; Directed by Randy Roberts; airdate: March 23, 1986; *Guest Cast:* Lane Smith (Robert “Bob” Warren); Lee de Broux (Cop); Bruce Gray, Arsenio Hall (Cleavon); Sam Hennings, Nana Visitor (Doris); Sandy Ignon (Hartenstein); Noel Conlon (Fred Tyler); Carolyn Carradine (Bev); James Boyce (Football Stud).

On his 50th birthday, an out-of-shape newspaper man is informed that his wife will be delayed in another city and is unable to catch a flight home. That night, he is served with a warrant for a murder committed in Ohio 22 years ago, and his heart troubles suddenly intensify.

**19. “The Jar”** Written by Larry Wilson and Michael McDowell; From a story by Ray Bradbury; Directed by Tim Burton; airdate: April 6, 1986; *Guest Cast:* Griffin Dunne (Nole); Fiona Lewis (Erica); Laraine Newman (Periwinkle); Stephen Shellen; Paul Bartel (Critic); Paul Werner (Nazi); Sunshine Parker (Texan); Eileen Barnett (Texan’s wife); Peter D. Risch (Happy Kaufmann); Regina Richardson (Female Art Type); Susan Moore (Female Fashion Victim); Nathan LeGrand (Male Fashion Victim); Roy Fegan (Person #1); Leah Kates (Person #2); Lori Lynn Lively (Frail Woman); Jeffrey Steven Kramer (Guest #1).

In 1938, a Nazi soldier chases a fugitive into a small shop, only to be killed by his prey when he becomes mesmerized by a strange blue jar and its fetuslike contents. Years later, a failing artist happens upon the jar under the hood of a ’38 Mercedes, and puts it on display in the gallery exhibiting his work.

*Note:* The original version of “The Jar” came from the mind of writer Ray Bradbury and the pen of writer James Bridges. It was directed by Norman Lloyd, and it aired on Valentine’s Day, 1964.

**20. “Deadly Honeymoon”** Written by Stephen Kronish; From a story by Henry Slesar; Directed by Don Medford; airdate: April 13, 1986; *Guest Cast:* Victoria Tennant (Carol); David Dukes (Dr.

Rigby); Alan Fudge (Wells); Nicolas Coster (Phil); Lester Fletcher (Salesman); Jerry Boyd (Doorman).

A woman marries a wealthy doctor whose previous wives have met with tragic and fatal “accidents.” A private investigator named Wells tries to warn the new bride that she is next in line for the same treatment, and her suspicions are aroused in a terminal showdown.

**21. “Four O’Clock”** Written by Steve Bello; From a story by Cornell Woolrich; Directed by Andrew Mirisch; airdate: May 4, 1986; *Guest Cast*: Kenneth McMillan (Paul); Richard Cox (Ben); Nicholas Pryer (Ryan); Ellen Tobie (Karen); Robert Dryer, Dennis C. Stewart (Thieves); Ernie Lively, James Ingersoll (Policemen); Grant Owens (Defense Attorney); Buzz Borelli (Paramedic).

A trial judge is also a jealous, older husband forever concerned that his young wife will leave him. When he believes he has received evidence that his wife is cheating on him, he rigs a bomb to destroy his house ... but things go wrong.

**22. “Road Hog”** Written by Charles Grant Craig, Steve Bello, and Stephen Kronish; From a story by Harold Daniels; Directed by Mario Di Leo; airdate: May 11, 1986; *Guest Cast*: Burt Young (Eddie “King of the Highway” Fratis); Ronny Cox (Sam Medwick); Lee Bryant (Mrs. Medwick); David Cowgill (Mike Medwick); Vincent Barbour (Tom Medwick); Doug Savant (Joey Medwick); Dennis Robertson (E.R. Doctor); Ed Hooks (Gas Station Attendant); Vernon Weddle (Old Wildcatter); Robert Corarrubias (Orderly); Jeff Tyler (Young Wildcatter).

In Texas oil country, a fat traveling salesman in his ’59 pink Cadillac purposely prevents another vehicle from passing him on the road. His misdeed causes the death of an injured oil worker who is being rushed to the hospital, and spurs a nasty bit of “road rage” from the worker’s grieving family.

*Note*: A remake of the November 22, 1959, episode based on a story by Harold Daniels, written by Bill Ballinger and directed by Stuart Rosenberg. It starred Richard Chamberlain and Raymond Massey.

• *The USA Seasons (1987–1989)*

*Note*: Airdates for the USA episodes have *not* been included below because it is a matter of some debate precisely when these episodes originally aired. Rather than airing in “regular” season format, these new episodes were aired on USA alongside and in-between a run of the 22 NBC episodes—thus forming a wholly new and difficult-to-track sequence of airdates. It was all part of a gimmick to make the show look more expensive than it really was. Audiences would tune in one week and see a glossy, network-made show featuring big stars, and then tune in the next week, see a cheaply-made clunker, and think it just an aberration.

The episode sequence listed below conforms to that detailed in Alan Morton’s exhaustive reference book *The Complete Directory to Science Fiction, Fantasy and Horror Television Series* (Other Worlds Books, 1997), although other sources (such as the dependable *Epi Log Magazine*) indicate a marginally different order.

**23. “Initiation”** Written by James Norman Beaver Jr. and Rob Hedden; From a story by Rob Heddon; Directed by Robert Iscove; *Guest Cast*: Marion Ross (Margaret Sturdevant); Peter Spence (Andrew/Duke); Dean Hamilton (John Mitchell); Albert Schultz (Greg Turner); Jesse Collins (Rick

Muldoon); Andrew Jackson (Parks); Doug Lennox (Patrolman).

A bunch of jokers in a fraternity house play a nasty prank on their housemother, Margaret, and then decide to dump on a nerdy pledge named Duke. His initiation involves a gun and some blanks, but it appears to go wrong when murder is apparently committed.

**24. “Conversation Over a Corpse”** Written by Marian Cockrell and Norman Daniels; From a story by Norman Daniels; Directed by Robert Iscove; *Guest Cast:* John Vernon (Mr. Brenner); Barbara Babcock (Sissy); Kate Reid (Joanna).

A slick real estate man hoping to make a killing tries to get two crazy sisters to sell their home. He is surprised when the sisters attempt to poison him and generally turn out to be far more dastardly and deceitful than even he would have expected.

*Note:* A remake of the November 18, 1956, episode written by Norman Daniels and directed by Jules Bricken.

**25. “Man on the Edge”** Written by James Norman Beaver, Jr. From a story by Donald Honig; Directed by Robert Iscove; *Guest Cast:* Mark Hamill (Danny); Jessica Steen (Sally); Michael Ironside (Lieutenant Muldoon).

A suicidal man, having lost his wife, his job, and his future, threatens to jump off the 28th floor of a hotel building. A nervous cop attempts to talk him down, but their ongoing debate will not end till at least one life has been claimed.

*Note:* A remake of “A Man with a Problem,” from a story by Donald Martin, a teleplay by Joel Murcott, and directed by Robert Stevens. It aired on November 16, 1958, and starred Mark Richman, Elizabeth Montgomery, and Gary Merrill.

**26. “If the Shoe Fits”** Written by Jonathan Glassner; Directed by Alan King; *Guest Cast:* Ted Shackelford (Jason); Lori Hallier (Samantha); Colin Fox (Victor); Cynthia Belliveau (Dana).

An envious and avaricious sibling murders his twin brother and steals what he thinks will be a perfect, wealthy life. He couldn't be more wrong: his brother was having an affair, facing a divorce, experiencing high pressure at the job, and being targeted as the prime suspect in a murder!

**27. “The Mole”** Written by Rick Berger; Directed by Richard Bugajski; *Guest Cast:* Ed Herrmann (Dr. Stoddard); Don Franks (Sgt. Willis); Jon Slan (Alan).

A killer called “the Mole” has been released from incarceration, and his doctor and a police officer try to stop him before he kills again. Unbeknownst to the cop, “the Mole” is closer than he thinks.

**28. “Anniversary Gift”** Written by Rob Hedden; From a story by John Collier; Directed by Richard Bugajski; *Guest Cast:* Pamela Sue Martin (Melinda); Peter Dvorsky (Mark); Paul Hubbard (Allan).

A husband with an eclectic home menagerie and an adulterous wife looking to murder him are the characters in this play about a snake which inadvertently gets loose in the house.

*Note:* A remake of an episode written by Harold Swanton based on a story by John Collier. It was

directed by Norman Lloyd and it starred Harry Morgan, Michael J. Pollard, Barbara Baxley, and Jackie Coogan. It aired on November 1, 1959.

**29. “The Impatient Patient”** Written by John Antrobus, Directed by Alan King; *Guest Cast:* E.G. Marshall (Charlie Pitt); Patricia Collins (Dr. Winton); Patricia Hamilton, Frances Hyland.

A man dying of cancer has given up all hope and longs for an end to it all. When an obnoxious, cold-hearted nurse comes to work on the ward, however, he finds that he has at least one reason to live.

**30. “When This Man Dies”** Written by Jeremy Hole; From a story by Lawrence Block; Directed by Jim Purdy; *Guest Cast:* Adrian Zmed (Edgar Kraft); Brenda Bazinet (Maureen); Frank Moore (James).

A man and wife who owe big money to a loan shark are flabbergasted when a strange letter arrives in the mail promising them lots of cash if a certain person dies. That person does die, and they receive the promised cash, but as the letters continue to arrive, the husband and wife discover that they must play a more active role in their lucrative new career.

**31. “The Specialty of the House”** Written by Jonathan Glassner; From a story by Stanley Ellin; Directed by Alan King; *Guest Cast:* John Saxon (Garth); Neil Munro (Russ); Jennifer Dale (Betty Jo).

A nasty restaurant critic goes out of his way to trash the reputation of a new eatery in town when the cook refuses to share a generations-old secret recipe. One night, the critic sneaks into the restaurant and learns the secret.

*Note:* A remake of “Specialty of the House,” which starred Robert Morley. The episode was written by Victor Wolfson, based on a story by Stanley Ellin, and directed by Robert Stevens. It aired on December 13, 1959.

**32. “The Final Twist”** Written by James Norman Beaver, Jr.; From a story by William Banker; Directed by Atom Egoyan; *Guest Cast:* Martin Landau (Wallace); Ann Marie Macdonald (Denise); Robert Wisden (Mike Johnson); Murray Cruchley (Lon).

A special effects crew is terrorized by an attention-grabbing, mean-spirited boss. They plan a very unique effects extravaganza to end his reign of terror.

**33. “Tragedy Tonight”** Written by Jonathan Glassner; Directed by Sturla Gunnarsson; *Guest Cast:* Catherine Mary Stewart (Rachel Jenkins); Denis Forest (Curt); Isabelle Mejias (Kelly).

A professional young woman with a serious job deadline in the morning is besieged by her sister’s strange acting partners and irritating games. Understandably, the woman thinks it is all an act when a man bursts into the apartment with a gun and threatens violence.

**34. “World’s Oldest Motive”** Written by Richard Chapman; From a story by Larry M. Harris; Directed by Alan King; *Guest Cast:* Dwight Shultz (David Powell); Dave Nichols (Smith); Diane Aquila (Ellen); Cynthia Dale.

A henpecked husband finds no way out when he becomes trapped between his constantly carping wife, a demanding mistress, and a hitman who assures him that money and murder can solve all his problems.

*Note:* A remake of the episode of the same name directed by Harry Morgan. It starred Robert Loggia, aired on April 12, 1965, and came from a story by Larry M. Harris. The teleplay was written by Lewis Davidson.

**35. “Deathmate”** Written by Marlene Matthews; From a story by James Causey; Directed by Alan King; *Guest Cast:* John Colicos (Carter); Samantha Eggar (Lisa); Wayne Best (Mark); Mary Beth Rubens (Beth); Richard Monette (Brian Moss).

A beautiful young wife is dissatisfied with her 60-year-old husband and plots to knock him off with the help of a young playboy, Mark. Although the playboy does not know it, he is being set up too.

*Note:* A remake of the story by James Causey, written by Bill Ballinger and directed by Alan Crosland. It starred Les Tremayne and aired on April 18, 1961.

**36. “Very Careful Rape”** Written by Michael Sloan; Directed by Zale Dalen; *Guest Cast:* Melissa Anderson (Laura); Cedric Smith (Paul Stevens); Laurie Patton (Kathy); Barbara Budd, Cheryl Wilson, David Walden.

A woman videotapes her own rape in hopes of trapping a married man she knows has committed wrongs against her family.

**37. “Animal Lovers”** Written by Robert DeLaurentis; Directed by Sturla Gunnarsson; *Guest Cast:* Susan Anton (Diane Lewis); Ron White (Ray); Cec Linder (Dr. Hoffman); Alex Willos (Witherspoon); Tanja Jacobs, Francie Volker.

A pet-loving woman is tricked into giving up her dog at the vet. Though she thinks it has been gassed because of a fatal illness, it has actually been sold to the highest bidder ... a fact which leads the animal lover to arrange a fatal gassing of her own.

**38. “Prism”** Written by Michael Sloan; Directed by Alan King; *Guest Cast:* Lindsay Wagner (Susan Forrester/Gypsy/Stella Freeman/Susi Farmer); Michael Sarrazin (Lieutenant Steven Ryker); Brent Stait (Jim Sweeny); Warren Davis (Jerry Katzman); Vivian Reiz (Dorothy Katzman); Susan Gattoni (Liddia); Terry Doyle (Coroner).

A police detective finds an unusual murder scene wherein a man has been murdered and the only witness is a grieving wife. The cop discovers later that the wife has multiple personalities including a redhead stripper, a brunette aerobics instructor, and a timid blond ... who was having an affair with the wife’s husband!

**39. “A Stolen Heart”** Written by Robert DeLaurentis; Directed by Rene Bonniere; *Guest Cast:* William Katt (Burke); Bernard Behrens (Eller); Damir Andrei (Winters); Sherry Flett, Marsha Brenon.

A beautiful young woman will die without an immediate heart transplant, but the only available organ is to be given to a wealthy backer of the hospital, also in need of an operation. A deadly game of hearts ensues as blackmail, ransom, and one final surgery decides who will live and who will die.

**40. “Houdini on Channel 4”** Written by Michael Sloan; Directed by Timothy Bond; *Guest Cast:* Nick



Lewin (Jack); Carolyn Dunn (Alicia); Barclay Hope (Oliver); Ray Paisley (Lt. Lansing); Neil Munro (David).

A young girl is kidnapped, and a kindly magician resorts to channeling the spirit of Harry Houdini to save her from a watery death trap. The rescue attempt fails, but the girl pays a high price for participation in the ransom attempt.

**41. “Killer Takes All”** Written by Michael Sloan and Robert DeLaurentis; Directed by Alan King; *Guest Cast:* Rory Calhoun (Jimmy); Van Johnson (Art); Shelly Peterson (Nurse Maxwell); John Dee; Aaron Schwartz, Nolan Jennings, Susan Fletcher.

Two old men vie for superiority in a “killer take all” game which involves murder and deceit.

**42. “Hippocratic Oath”** Written by Michael Colleary and Ray DeLaurentis; Directed by Vic Sarin; *Guest Cast:* Shaun Cassidy (Dale Thurston); Cynthia Belliveau (Mary); Eric Peterson (Hank); Mavor Moore (Dean); Anthony Sherwood, J.R. Zimmerman, David Rosser.

A wealthy but feckless medical school student who stands to inherit a fortune upon earning his medical degree resorts to murder when a stubborn dean refuses to let him graduate.

**43. “Prosecutor”** Written by Glenn Davis and William Laurin; From a story by Henry Slesar; Directed by David Gelfand; *Guest Cast:* Parker Stevenson (Clark); Camilla Scott (Pamela); Lawrence Dane (Joe); Robert Morelli (Roarke); Roger Barnes, Carlton Watson.

A corrupt district attorney knowingly sends the wrong man to prison for the murder of a high ranking police official. After the trial, he is disturbed when the real murderer shows up and starts to make excessive demands in exchange for his silence.

**44. “If Looks Could Kill”** Written by Susan Woolen; From a story by Michael Colleary and Ray DeLaurentis; Directed by William Fruet; *Guest Cast:* Michele Philips (Katherine); Duncan Regehr (David); Peter MacNeill (Dr. Austin); Andrea Roth (Anna); Dale Wilson, Lisa Schrage.

A desperate married woman cheats on her husband and remakes herself into the image of a handsome millionaire’s long-lost lover. She is unaware that his obsession for his missing bride-to-be stems not from love and lust, but total and utter hatred.

**45. “You’ll Die Laughing”** Written by Michael Sloan; Directed by Zale Dalen; *Guest Cast:* Gary Blumsack (Jed); Lorraine Landry (Elizabeth); Anthony Newley (Halloran); Ronnie Edwards; J.W. Carroll.

The cutthroat world of stand-up comedy is the backdrop for this tale of deceit, betrayal, and million-dollar insurance clauses.

**46. “Murder Party”** Written by Robert DeLaurentis; Directed by Alan King; *Guest Cast:* David McCallum (Cavanaugh); Leigh Taylor-Young (Adelaide); David Hemblin, Colin Fox, Malcolm Stewart, Christopher Bondy.

At a very special birthday party, a guest is poisoned by a deadly glass of wine. A policeman on the scene conducts the investigation, probing each guest for the possible motives in murdering the dead

man.

**47. “Twist”** Written by Manny Coto; Directed by Rene Bonniere; *Guest Cast:* Stella Stevens (Georgia); Clive Revilla (Hector); Art Hindle (Brooks); Roberta Weiss, David Adamson.

Another tale of double crosses and counterpunches as a man and his model girlfriend plot to murder his wheelchair-bound wife and collect the money from her insurance policy. Meanwhile, loyalties have turned and the butler is helping the crippled wife, and the model is in league with somebody else, and so on and so on.

**48. “User Deadly”** Written by William Laurin and Glenn Davis; From a story by Brian Ross; Directed by Alan King; *Guest Cast:* Harry Guardino (Phil Pansfield); Peter Spence (Jerry); Geordie Johnson (Dave); Eugene Clark, Sean Hewitt, Ted Wallace, Kim Nelles.

A policeman due for retirement attempts to solve a series of crimes before leaving the force. Using his new computer, he begins to receive messages from the murderer: messages that he believes will lead him to his culprit if only he can figure out what they mean.

**49. “Career Move”** Written by Glenn Davis, William Laurin and Montgomery Burt; From a story by Montgomery Burt; Directed by Timothy Bond; *Guest Cast:* David Cassidy (Joey Mitchell); Robert Wisden (Marty Parks); Mary Beth Rubens (Alison); Peter Virgile (Billy Gunn); Alar Aedma (Tommy Dalton); Hal Johnson (Detective Stone).

Rock star Joey Mitchell returns to his career after a rough period of alcoholism which has lasted several years, but he sees his comeback go down in flames when he instigates a brawl on stage with upcoming rock star Billy Gunn. To spur another career revival, Joey conspires with his adulterous ex-wife and his avaricious manager to stage his own “fake” death and then watch his record sales soar.

**50. “Full Disclosure”** Written by Glenn Davis and William Laurin; Directed by Bill Corcoran; *Guest Cast:* Robert Lansing (William Howe); Al Waxman (Dale); Donald Davis (Senator Powell); Eve Crawford, Kevin Hicks, Ray Landry, Gerry Mendicino, Ted Dillon.

A down-on-his luck writer needs a publishing contract, so he plans to write a scathing memoir about his associates inside the Washington, D.C., power elite. He is soon framed for murder by a powerful senator and urged not to publish his book, lest he be named a murderer and put away for good.

**51. “Kandinsky’s Vault”** Written by Steven Hollander; Directed by Rene Bonniere; *Guest Cast:* Eli Wallach (Josef Kandinsky); Roberta Wallach (Charlotte); Robin Ward (Adrian Gelthorpe); Lisa Jakub (Missy).

A kindly old man named Kandinsky refuses to sell his rare book shop because deep underneath it is a series of catacombs and vaults that once belonged to a mob boss who saved his life. A real estate developer believes there may be fortune in those long-forgotten tunnels, and seeks to steal a map which will lead him to the ill-gotten fortune.

**52. “There Was a Little Girl”** Written by Charles Grant Craig; Directed by Atom Egoyan; *Guest Cast:* Michael Tucker (Frank); Kate Vernon (Donna); James Kee (Harry); Wayne Robson (Pickett); Wanda Cannon (Martha).

A spoiled little rich girl becomes a willing pawn in a battle of wills over a small fortune. Soon the police, her stepfather, her mother and boyfriend are planning various and sundry murders as well as carefree futures in Tahiti.

**53. “Twisted Sisters”** Written by Ray DeLaurentis and Michael Colleary; Directed by Timothy Bond; *Guest Cast:* Mia Sara (Sarah); Carolyn Dunn (Candy); Marianna Pascal (Denise); Stan Coles (Detective Morrison); Allison Mang (Amanda).

A sorority “hell night” hazing turns to terror when a girl is locked inside a haunted house replete with ghosts, as well as ghosts from the past. The sorority tormentors discover that their victim knows about something they did on a night like this once, not so long ago.

**54. “The 13th Floor”** Written by Naomi Janzen; Directed by Mark Rosman; *Guest Cast:* Tony Franciosa (Conrad); Laura Robinson (Allison); Hal Eisen (Frazier); Ben Gordon (Detective Harris); Robert King, David Hughes, Richard Comar, John Curtis.

A money-hungry real estate developer plans to demolish a piece of history when he authorizes the destruction of a long-standing city hotel. The developer gets a taste of his own cruelty when he is trapped on the hotel’s 13th floor as the countdown to detonation begins.

**55. “The Hunted” (Part I)** Written by Michael Sloan; Directed by Timothy Bond; *Guest Cast:* Edward Woodward (Drummond); Kate Trotter (Margaret).

A troubled man becomes a menace to society when he takes up a rifle and threatens to become a sniper. He is trapped with a woman who tries desperately to stop him.

**56. “The Hunted” (Part II)** Written by Michael Sloan; Directed by Timothy Bond; *Guest Cast:* Edward Woodward (Drummond); Kate Trotter (Margaret); David Fox, Mark Teren, Sunni McFadden.

The angry sniper threatens to go on a killing spree just as his captive, Margaret, begins to sympathize with him. As it turns out, his wife has left him for another man, his gun is loaded with blanks, and what he really wants is for the police to kill him so his suffering will end.

**57. “Fogbound”** Written by Lee Erwin; From a story by Martin Brooke; Directed by Mark Sobel; *Guest Cast:* Kathleen Quinlan (Karen); Rick Sarabia (Manuel); Jonathan Crombie (Rick); Stephen Mendel, Lindsay Leese, Michael Donaghue.

All alone at night in her mountain home, a woman hears a knock on her front door. She is unexpectedly faced with a difficult choice: Should she let a stranger inside because he claims his girlfriend is sick and his car is out of gas, or should she turn her back on him out of fear?

**58. “Pen Pal”** Written by Hilary Murray; From a story by Henry Slesar and Jay Folb; Directed by Rene Bonniere; *Guest Cast:* Jean Simmons (Margaret); Page Fletcher (John Harris); April Banigan (Margie); Geza Kovacs.

A woman and her niece correspond regularly with a convict, each unaware that the other is vying for his attention. When the convict escapes from jail and shows up at their house, the matter comes to a head.

*Note:* A remake of the original, aired on November 1, 1960. It came from a story by Henry Slesar and Jay Folb. It was written by Hilary Murray, directed by John Brahm. The original starred Clu Gulager and Stanley Adams.

**59. “Ancient Voices”** Written by William Laurin and Glenn Davis; Directed by Bill Corcoran; *Guest Cast:* Richard Anderson (Tom); Doug McClure (Clete); Myron Natwick (Adam); John C. MacKenzie (Rich); Claire Cellucci, Rob Stewart, David Gardner.

Another cheatin’ husband resorts to murder to rid himself of his wife. This time, the setting is a “séance” session and again, there is a sting in the tale.

**60. “Survival of the Fittest”** Written by Michael Sloan; Directed by Alan King; *Guest Cast:* Patrick Macnee (Thaddeus J. Russell); Nigel Bennett (Griffin).

A lonely writer returns home to his country mansion to find it under constant siege by an unknown but resourceful enemy. The writer beats his assailants, but learns that though the battle is won, the war is just beginning.

**61. “The Big Spin”** Written by Maxwell Pitt; From a story by Matt Dearborn; Directed by Al Waxman; *Guest Cast:* Eric Estrada (Vinnie); Kathy Laskey (Sandy); David Stein (Detective Briant); Robert Bidaman, Guylaine St. Onge.

A two-timing cab driver discovers that his latest fare has left behind a million dollar lottery ticket in his backseat. Keeping his hands on the winning ticket proves difficult, as murder ensues and the cab driver faces a final deceit.

**62. “Don’t Sell Yourself Short”** Written by Douglas Steinberg; Directed by Rene Bonniere; *Guest Cast:* David Soul (Dennison); Harvey Atkin (Sam); Susan Hogan (Joyce); Terry Thomas, Leon Pownall.

Once more, the acquisition of a fortune is the name of the game as business partners resort to murder and double-crosses.

**63. “For Art’s Sake”** Written by Linda Chase; Directed by Bill Corcoran; *Guest Cast:* Michele Scarabelli (Erica); Bruce Gray (Bryan); Simon Williams (Arthur); Sheila McCarthy (Debra); Stewart Coates (Mr. Collier); Joan Heney (Mrs. Collier).

A two-timing artist cheats once too often and meets a deadly end when his mistress and his wife (the *real* artist) join forces to teach him a lesson. He models for a full-body bit of art, only to discover that he will never survive asphyxiation inside the compound mixture.

**64. “Murder in Mind”** Written by Sarrett Rudley; From a story by Emily Neff; Directed by Alan King; *Guest Cast:* Melissa Anderson (Julie Fenton); Ann Marie MacDonald (Mrs. Blanchard); Noel Harrison (Mr. Blanchard); Larry Lalonde (Donald).

An imaginative but bored writer of crime/mystery novels spies on her new neighbors and gets the notion that the husband has murdered his wife and hidden her body. The truth is something a bit more startling.

*Note:* A remake of “Mr. Blanchard’s Secret,” from a story by Emily Neff and writer Sarrett Rudley. The original was directed by Alfred Hitchcock, and it aired December 23, 1956.

**65. “Mirror, Mirror”** Written by Jack Blum and Sharon Corder; Directed by Richard Lewis; *Guest Cast:* Elizabeth Ashley (Karen); Brent Strait; Graham McPherson (Lt. Reed); Robert Collins, Danny Dion, Robert McHeady.

A woman has visions that her sister is in danger. When she learns from the police that a killer has been discovered in her sister’s neighborhood, and that her sister’s prescription needs refilling, the woman begins to wonder.

**66. “Skeleton in the Closet”** Written by Brian Clemens, William Laurin and Glenn Davis; Directed by George Mendeluk; *Guest Cast:* Mimi Kuzyk (Betty King); Bill Lake (Sam); Jeff Wincott (Tom); Elizabeth Hanna (Janice); Michael Kirby (Al); Sam Moses.

A woman with a secret in her past is blackmailed by an old acquaintance. Fortunately, the woman has a special individual in her family’s history who is known to help out in situations like this.

**67. “In the Driver’s Seat”** Written by Glenn Davis and William Laurin; From a story by Paul Monette and Alfred Sole; Directed by Timothy Bond; *Guest Cast:* Greg Evigan (David); Bill MacDonald (Alan); Judy Sloan (Ann); Nadine Van Der Velde (Rebecca); David Elliott, Mary Long.

A race car driver has suffered paralyzing injuries in a racing accident and is now obsessed with the idea that his wife is having an affair with his physical therapist. The racer’s jealousy drives him to conduct a murderous test of loyalty.

**68. “Driving Under the Influence”** Written by Josephine Cummings and Richard Yalem; Directed by Bradley Silberling; *Guest Cast:* Mike Connors (Robert); John Novak (Jason); Gwynyth Walsh (Ann); Shirley Douglas (Monica); David Nichols (Detective).

A drunk driver who once murdered a girl in a hit-and-run accident finds himself the victim of a sting when he is involved in another hit-and-run after a party. The man seeks to escape the trap, but justice comes full circle.

**69. “In the Name of Science”** Written by Alan Sawyer, Glenn Davis and William Laurin; From a story by Alan Sawyer; Directed by Zale Dalen; *Guest Cast:* Dirk Benedict (Dr. Rush); Catherine Disher (Cindy); James B. Douglas (Bingham); Joseph Ziegler (Dr. Hendricks); Sandey Grinn (Dr. Clifford); Francois Klanfer.

A doctor becomes involved with a government experiment which has serious moral repercussions. Afraid and paranoid, he seeks a way out of his predicament, unsure whom to trust.

**70. “Romance Machine”** Written by Robert DeLaurentis; Directed by Rene Bonniere; *Guest Cast:* Art Hindle (Mr. Gold); Rich Hall (Eddie); Barclay Hope (Harvey); Diane Franklin (Paula).

In a future society, a lonely cyborg scientist contemplates a way to make himself attractive to his unrequited love. The plan involves robot duplicates ... and murder.

**71. “Diamonds Aren’t Forever”** Written by Glenn Davis and William Laurin; Directed by Peter

Crane; *Guest Cast*: George Lazenby (James); Jack Blum (Mickey); Eve Crawford (Rachel); Chris Moore, Don Lake, Sam Malkan, Peter Langley, Ian White.

A British superspy named James parachutes into his latest death-defying mission: a search for an all-important statue that could decide the fate of the world. But there are enemy agents everywhere.

**72. “My Dear Watson”** Written by Susan Woolen; Directed by Jorge Montesi; *Guest Cast*: Brian Bedford (Holmes); Patrick Moncton (Watson); John Colicos (Moriarity); Graeme Campbell (Mycroft).

Inspector Lestrade has disappeared and Sherlock Holmes and Dr. Watson are on the case. Holmes’ old nemesis, Moriarity, is on the loose.

**73. “Night Creatures”** Written by Michael Sloan; Directed by Richard J. Lewis; *Guest Cast*: Louise Vallanc (Holly); Jason Blicher (Freak); Brett Cullen (Cooper); Michael Rhodes (LeCross); Ray James (Max).

A journalist who has a disturbing vision must shunt her fear aside to cover a story in San Francisco about a rock band. Her vision proves prophetic, however, when she discovers that the band consists of vampires.

**74. “The Man Who Knew Too Little”** Written by Pascal Bonniere, William Laurin and Glenn Davis; Directed by Ray Austin; *Guest Cast*: Lewis Collins (Bill); Cynthia Belliveau (Cassie); Don Fenton (Hamilton); Chuck Shamata (Phil).

It’s spy versus spy as a man with amnesia tries to puzzle out the logic behind the kidnapping of a beautiful woman and the involvement of a large-scale chemical company.

**75. “Reunion”** Written by Michael Sloan; Directed by John Wood; *Guest Cast*: Geraint Wyn-Davies (Stebbins); James Blendick (Stacy); Patricia Collins (Laura); Wayne Best (Spindle); Andrew Thomson (Libowitz); William Dunlop (Raggs).

A guilt-ridden Vietnam vet gathers survivors of his platoon each year and relives their final battle to determine what went wrong. Twenty years have passed, and the guilt has reached epic proportions.

**76. “South by Southeast”** Written by Michael Sloan and Robert DeLaurentis; Directed by Michael Sloan; *Guest Cast*: Patrick Wayne (Michael Roberts); Arlene Mazerolle (Susan); Cedric Smith (Van Dorn); William Laurin (Laurin); Glenn Davis (David); Michael Sloan (Sloan).

An aspiring actor discovers that life imitates art when he becomes involved in intrigue and deceit while auditioning for a remake of Hitchcock’s *North by Northwest*.

## *Werewolf (1987–1988)*

### CRITICAL RECEPTION

“The pilot is slow, turgid and self-conscious, with long periods of dead space between the special effects. Nonetheless, the film ... does have some choice lines.... The problem, however, is that we don’t know if it’s really supposed to be funny. *Werewolf* may just be killing time.... There is an interesting rock score, but mostly the film just waits for the special effects.”—John Corry, *The New York Times*: “*Werewolf* on Channel 5,” July 10, 1987.

“*Werewolf* has gathered the elements used in horror films—dark and moody atmosphere, high body count, innumerable man-into animal metamorphoses—and assembled them in the most desultory manner possible. This is terror by Mattel, and it makes the predictable spilled blood a goof, a dull nightmare. Some find this amusing, others unwatchable.... *Werewolf* is basically *The Incredible Hulk* with a body afro.... And York is treated to every form of humiliation ... you wonder when some grizzled yokel cradling a shotgun will walk up to him ... and say, ‘Boy, you sure got a pretty mouth.’”—Elvis Mitchell, *Rolling Stone*: “Terror by Mattel,” May 5, 1988, page 32.

“The sometimes gripping sequences offer lots of darkened scenes ... plenty of werewolf lore, and their own group of media allusions ... I don’t think you’ll be chuckling much during this eerie show, but you may find a few unintended laughs lurking in the somber plotline.”—Alan Bunce, *The Christian Science Monitor*, July 16, 1987.

“York seems logically cursed and upset. Greg Cannom has created effective werewolf makeup, effects, and transformations, and Rick Baker has done a horrendously good job of designing the ugly creatures.... If *Werewolf* isn’t the scary piece of vidpic work it might be, at least it’s a change of pace in videoland, and some imagination has gone into plumping a premise that was old when Hector was a pup. What is missing ... is the vitality, chilling fun and imagination of those 1940s Lon Chaney Jr. films.”—*Variety*, July 15, 1987, page 50.

### FORMAT

Life was pretty sweet for college student Eric Cord. He had a beautiful girlfriend named Kelly, a terrific roommate named Ted, and high hopes for the future. All that changed, however, when Eric discovered that Ted was a werewolf. Poor Ted begged to be killed so that the curse of lycanthropy would end for him once and for all, but Eric was unable to do the job until he himself was bitten by Ted in werewolf form.

Suddenly, Eric Cord was not just wanted for murder, he too was a werewolf! Fleeing bail and skipping out on his trial, Eric set out in search of Captain Janos Skorzeny, the one-eyed man Ted believed had turned him into a werewolf the previous summer. Only by severing the original bloodline, by killing the nasty and brutish Skorzeny, can Eric hope to return to normal and end the curse. Pursued across country by a half-Indian bounty hunter named Alamo Joe, Eric now scours America on Skorzeny’s trail. Along the way, he helps people whenever possible, and tries to maintain control of his werewolf transformations. Eric always knows when the metamorphosis will begin because a bloody pentagram

forms in the palm of his left hand. Unlike traditional werewolf lore, the full moon apparently has nothing to do with the werewolf cycle. Silver, on the other hand, remains the only substance that can kill a lycanthrope, and Alamo Joe always has his silver bullets handy should he encounter his quarry.

About two-thirds of the way through *Werewolf*, star Chuck Connors, Skorzeny, decided he wanted to leave the program. As a result, Skorzeny is killed and Eric discovers that he is still a werewolf. The original bloodline began not with the sea captain after all, but with a yuppie named Remy. Eric spent the remainder of the short-lived show attempting to do in this new and far more powerful foe.

Unlike most horror adventures featuring continuing characters, each installment of *Werewolf* is only 30 minutes long, which results sometimes in a startling lack of substantive plotlines. One of the earliest series on the then-brand new Fox network, some *Werewolf* episodes are preceded by a warning that they may be “too intense” for younger viewers.

Every *Werewolf* chapter commences with the sound of a wolf howl and a shot of a full moon high in the night sky. The camera pans down to a long shot of a brightly-lit city. Then, there is a cut to a close-up of a growling werewolf. A blinding light shines out of one feral eye and then fills the screen. Finally, the title *Werewolf* comes up in crimson lettering, accompanied by a further howl.

One of *Werewolf*'s main claims to fame is that Rick Baker, legendary Hollywood makeup man and Oscar winner, designed the werewolf costume. It still looks very convincing (and very frightening) after more than a decade. The talented Greg Cannom was responsible for the equally convincing transformations from man to beast.

Early on, *Werewolf* was advertised with the ad-line “There are those who believe ... and those who will.”

## HISTORY

Ever since Lon Chaney Jr. played the tortured Lawrence Talbot in *The Wolf Man* (1941), Hollywood and American audiences have shared a fascination for lycanthropy lore and werewolf myth. An incredible revolution in special effects makeup and technology brought the werewolf legend to the forefront of public attention again in the early 1980s when films such as *An American Werewolf in London* (directed by John Landis) and *The Howling* (directed by Joe Dante) featured hair-raising, man-to-beast transformations courtesy of effects wizards such as Rick Baker (*King Kong* [1976]) and Rob Bottin (*The Thing* [1982]).

In fact, the '80s might even be deemed the decade of the werewolf since a variety of wolf-man themed pictures were released then, including the comic remake of *I Was a Teenage Werewolf* (1958) called *Teen Wolf* (1985) starring Michael J. Fox, *Teen Wolf 2* (1987) starring Jason Bateman, and an adaptation of Whitley Streiber's novel *Wolfen* (1981) starring Albert Finney.

Since television has always been quick to jump on a popular idea, perhaps it is no surprise that a TV series entitled *Werewolf* came along in the mid-summer of 1987. Although the fabulous and frightening effects featured in *The Howling* and *An American Werewolf in London* had already made their network TV debut in the forgettable 1984 NBC superhero series *Manimal* starring Simon MacCorkindale and Melody Anderson, *Werewolf* would be the first continuing TV program to deploy these rubbery transformations in a horror setting week-after-week. To that end, *American Werewolf in*



London's effects man, Rick Baker, designed the impressive and realistic hairy suits for the new series, and Greg Cannom was in charge of the weekly metamorphosis from human to wolf.

*Werewolf* was created by the appropriately named Frank Lupo, a veteran producer who had cut his teeth as writer/producer on various TV programs including the dreadful *Galactica: 1980* (1980) and the popular, if inane, *The A-Team* (1983-87). Lupo sold his horror series concept to the new Fox Network based on a simple twist: his titular werewolf would be the protagonist, not the villain of the series and the werewolf hunter, a half-Indian cowboy, would be the antagonist. For fledgling Fox, which at the time was airing mostly low-brow fare such as *Married ... with Children* and a dreadful TV version of *Down and Out in Beverly Hills*, this concept seemed a promising one. It was a wise decision to commission the series, because when *Werewolf* began airing its initial half-dozen episodes in July of 1987, it was a ratings hit. As a result, the series was immediately renewed for a full season of two dozen episodes. Its initial time slot was Saturday night at 8:00, but later the ratings fell when *Werewolf* was moved to Sunday nights at 8:00 P.M.: the time slot which *The Simpsons* has dominated ever since *Werewolf's* cancellation.

Both behind and in front of the cameras, *Werewolf* was a well-manned enterprise. Behind the scenes, Allan Cole and Chris Bunch, writers on *The Incredible Hulk* (1978-81), *Buck Rogers in the 25th Century* (1979-81), and *Galactica: 1980* story-edited the series and guided the efforts of "guest" writers such as Craig Tepper and Norman Spinrad ("Gray Wolf"). Directing these ventures were the ubiquitous but incredibly talented Rob Bowman (*Star Trek: The Next Generation*: "Datalore," "Heart of Glory," "A Matter of Honor," *Dark Shadows*, and *The X-Files*) and genre legend James Darren (*The Time Tunnel* [1966], *T.J. Hooker* [1982-86], and *Star Trek: Deep Space Nine* [1993-99]). In front of the cameras, *The Rifleman* (1958-63) himself, Chuck Connors (1921-92) played lead werewolf Janos Skorzeny (named after the vampire in *The Night Stalker* telefilm), and character actor Lance Le Gault (*The A-Team*, *Buck Rogers in the 25th Century*: "Time of the Hawk," *Battlestar Galactica*: "The Man with Nine Lives," "Baltar's Escape," and *Star Trek: The Next Generation*: "The Emissary") inherited the role of that old genre standby, the hapless pursuer, here called Alamo Joe. Leading this eccentric but good cast was handsome John J. York as Eric Cord. A frequent guest star of episodic TV like *Hotel*, York made great impact as *Werewolf's* doomed lead character. He was refreshingly down-to-earth, and "real" in his performance as a tortured man trying to reclaim his life. Guest stars on the series included Todd Bryant (*Star Trek V: The Final Frontier* [1989]) in "To Dream of Wolves," Richard Lynch of *Invasion U.S.A.* (1984) and *Bad Dreams* (1987) in "Nightmare at the Braine Hotel," Ethan Phillips (Neelix of *Voyager*) in the pilot, Joseph Whipp of *A Nightmare on Elm Street* (1984) and *Scream* (1996) in "Blood Ties," Sid Haig, Howard Duff, Michelle Johnson, and Raphael Sbarge.

As the series wore on, star Chuck Connors made increasing financial demands on the producers, and consequently his character, Skorzeny, was eliminated from the format (in "To Dream of Wolves"). During the last few episodes featuring Skorzeny, a stunt double (Dick Durock) was used. From "To Dream of Wolves" on, Eric Cord was in pursuit of Nicholas Remy (Brian Thompson of *Kindred: The Embraced* and *The X-Files*), the originator of the werewolf cursed bloodline.

For a while, everything on *Werewolf* seemed to be going quite well. Ratings were high (but falling ...), and the half-hour format permitted a concise-style of storytelling that was both fast-paced and gripping. When Frank Lupo and producer John Ashley diversified and began to simultaneously produce a new TV series about an alien law enforcement officer hunting extraterrestrial criminals on Earth (a kind of early *Men in Black* [1997] scenario) entitled *Something Is Out There*, however,

fortunes started to change. *Werewolf* faced not just an overworked creative team, but new demands from the Fox Network. As Chris Bunch and Allan Cole, story editors on *Werewolf*, explained:

It was one of the few hits Fox had at the time and everyone knew it was going to get picked up.... However, Fox wanted to expand the show to an hour and Frank argued that the werewolf appearances would become as predictable as ... *The Incredible Hulk*. At that point, the screaming started.... Another problem was that Frank was busy with the *Something Is Out There* miniseries.... We told Frank not to do it because all previous alien-on-Earth shows ... had failed.<sup>1</sup>

Although Fox had promised *Werewolf's* creative personnel that it would return the hit series to its original Saturday night time slot (where ratings were stronger) if they delivered an hour-long show, Lupu ultimately decided not to see his creation bastardized into a superhero show along the lines of *The Incredible Hulk* or *Wonder Woman* (1978-80). At the same time, however, *Something Is Out There* failed to capture the huge audience NBC had anticipated (because, no doubt, it was scheduled against *Dallas* on Friday nights at 9:00). This double blow made things quite unhappy for *Werewolf* creator Lupu, as producer John Ashley lamented later:

Losing *two* genre series in *one* year must be some kind of a record.... We honestly felt that the show [*Werewolf*] wouldn't work as an hour, so we ended it ... there's a possibility of our doing a two hour movie for Fox to conclude the *Werewolf* storyline.<sup>2</sup>

Sadly, that interesting project never emerged and *Werewolf*, a one-time ratings bonanza for Fox, died in 1988 without a resolution to its plot. Of all the parties involved, perhaps Fox was the real winner here. Having learned its lesson with *Werewolf*, Fox granted Chris Carter and *The X-Files* the freedom and the time to go grow artistically in 1993. They might have really had a winning combination had they shown the same faith in *Werewolf*: they could have offered a night of horror beginning with *Werewolf* and culminating with *The X-Files*. As for *Werewolf* star John J. York, he experienced a brief dry spell after the series folded before appearing as a regular on the popular daytime drama *General Hospital*. The werewolf legend itself will never grow old or die, and it has already been the centerpiece of another horror TV series, *She Wolf of London* (1990) as well as an element of *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* (1997-?). At the movies, audiences have also seen werewolves in Mike Nichols' Jack Nicholson venture *Wolf* (1994) and in *An American Werewolf in Paris* (1997). Released directly to video, there have been at least five sequels to *The Howling*.

Strangely, *Werewolf* has never been rerun. This is a shame because it is a terror TV series which had real potential, and in some episodes even managed to realize that potential rather poetically. One of the few half-hour horror TV series to feature continuing characters (along with *Beyond Reality* [1991-93] and *Dracula: The Series* [1991]), *Werewolf* boasts 29 episodes in its roster. A reunion or sequel movie seems unlikely at this late date, but *Werewolf* would be an excellent property for the Sci-Fi Channel to capitalize on. Having recently picked up series such as *Sliders*, *Poltergeist: The Legacy*, and *Mystery Science Theater 3000*, a new *Werewolf* might not be a bad idea. The first episode could feature a 40-year-old Eric Cord, having finally lost his battle for humanity, passing on the werewolf curse to a new lead character.

## CRITICAL COMMENTARY

Sometimes a tried and true formula really works remarkably well if properly oiled ... and sometimes

it doesn't. On a first viewing, Frank Lupo's 1987 series *Werewolf* appears to be composed almost entirely of formula components, a regurgitation of the "man-on-the-run" style of TV show first popularized by *The Fugitive* in the mid-sixties. In surface detail and description, *Werewolf* fits that ideal all too well. Eric Cord is on the run for a crime he did not commit (like Kimball in *The Fugitive* and David Banner in *The Incredible Hulk* [1978-82]), and he possesses a "special power" which makes him unique (à la Judson Scott's Bennu in *The Phoenix* [1982] and Robert Hays' Starman in *Starman* [1986-87]). Cord is chasing the man he deems responsible for his plight, Janos Skorzeny (who is equivalent to the one-armed man in *The Fugitive*) at the same time that he is being dogged by a law enforcement official/journalist (Barry Morse as Lieutenant Gerard in *The Fugitive*; Richard Lynch as Preminger in *The Phoenix*; Michael Cavanaugh as Fox in *Starman*; Mark Lenard as Urko in *Planet of the Apes* [1974]; Don Knight as Fletcher in *The Immortal* [1970-71]), Jack Colvin as McGee in *The Incredible Hulk*, and so on). In *Werewolf*, this hapless pursuer—who can never quite catch his quarry—is Alamo Joe Rogan (Lance Le Gault). This "man-on-the-run" or "fugitive" formula has also been seen on *The Invaders* (1967-68), *Hot Pursuit* (1984), *Otherworld* (1985), *The Fifth Corner* (1992), *Dead at 21* (1994), and *Nowhere Man* (1995), and even to some extent on the British cult classic, *Blake's 7* (1978-81). In virtually all of these series, the "on-the-run" hero meets and "helps" individuals (guest stars) every week who are in some kind of trouble (usually crime-related.)

The problem with this oft-used format is twofold: first, the audience knows the hapless pursuer will never catch the hero because then the series would be over, and second that the hero will never find the solution to his problem because then he could stop running and, again, the series would be kaput.

*Werewolf* is undeniably a "man-on-the-run" show, but it overcomes the limitations of its clichéd formula in some rather creative ways. First of all, it faces rather than ignores Eric's grim reality. On *The Incredible Hulk*, the star of the show always looked well-fed, clean-shaven, and freshly-showered. This kind of pristine appearance indicated that life as a fugitive was not really so bad. Not so on *Werewolf*, where star John J. York became scuzzier-looking and more emaciated the longer the show continued. Also, as a homeless person on the run, he was forced to beg for food/money when starving ("Amazing Grace"), share a train car with bums ("King of the Road"), bed down in a dingy old boathold in "Nightwatch," and sleep in a bus depot in "Nightmare at the Braine Motel." It was not a glamorous TV trip, that was for certain. Visually then, *Werewolf* was essentially an excursion through the underside of modern city life: train stations at midnight, old flea-bag hotels, rotting sea vessels, rough-and-tumble wharveside bars and other unpleasant places were the order of the day. The extras cast in these locations actually *looked* menacing, and the feelings of a seamy underworld were beautifully reinforced. People identified with and worried for Eric because he was skimming the bottom of a very tough world, and yet his decency always shone through (though not in a cheesy, Hollywood way, thankfully). In fact, Eric's journey from affluent middle-class yuppie to street bum reflected the Reagan America of the times. The middle class was shrinking, the rich were getting richer, the poor were getting poorer, and more and more Americans were finding themselves both homeless and helpless thanks to the folly of "trickle down" economics. In some senses, *Werewolf* reflected this trend by sending its hero on a "mythic" quest into a dark place, an America where nobody cared about others anymore.

Secondly, *Werewolf* was all too aware of its restrictive formula and so did everything possible to rail against those flaws. It found ways to be innovative within the context of so many format limitations. For instance, Alamo Joe *does* catch Eric in the episode "A World of Difference" and for much of the episode it actually seems that Eric is dead and that Alamo Joe will inherit his curse. Further breaking

convention, the same episode humanizes Alamo Joe to a high degree by exploring his own fear of lycanthropy, revealing his emotions about his half-breed heritage and his relationship with his ex-wife, and even explaining why he feels it is necessary to pursue Eric to the bitter end. In short, “A World of Difference” strives to bring three dimensions to a long-standing TV character who has always remained resolutely two-dimensional. Lance Le Gault, an underrated performer who has done this kind of role before (Colonel Decker on the *A-Team*), shines in this episode, making the hunter as interesting as the hunted, and bringing life to the hapless pursuer.

Furthermore, *Werewolf* attempted during its time on the air to show the audience and Eric a heretofore unseen and dark history of our world. Skorzeny is an immortal with a curse and a very long history, and his inglorious past is explored in detail when Eric finds a chest of his belongings and experiences visions of Skorzeny fighting the war against Napoleon. In the same episode (“To Dream of Wolves”), Eric discovers the past of Nicholas Remy, another werewolf who served as a witch hunter during the Spanish Inquisition and as a Nazi officer during World War II. By going back to these past lives, *Werewolf* captured an idea straight from Anne Rice’s *Interview with the Vampire* but later popularized by TV series such as *Highlander*, *Forever Knight*, and even *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* to some extent. The notion was that “monstrous” people (whether vampire or werewolf) carry long pasts with them which influence the present. Basically, *Werewolf* was willing to chuck its TV “man on the run” formula if there was an opportunity to tell a story about the characters, their histories, and their life choices. In any TV series, horror or not, such a decision is an impressive one.

*Werewolf* also gains some esteem for its devotion to an overall story arc. The story is essentially one of a self-satisfied, drop-dead gorgeous yuppie who must face a total lifestyle reversal. Cord goes from a world of free-flowing money, backyard swimming pools, gorgeous women, and plenty to the universe of sleaze. He loses everything, even his status under the law, and becomes a homeless drifter forgotten by everyone except those who wish to destroy him. In essence, it is a story of redemption through a curse. Lycanthropy is equated to an addiction like alcoholism, or a disease of the blood, like AIDS, so that Cord, once the pretty-boy insider, suddenly has the viewpoint of a forgotten outsider. In the episodes where this idea is the backdrop for events (the pilot, “A World of Difference,” “The Black Ship,” “Nightmare at the Braine Hotel”), *Werewolf* really works on more than one thematic level. The sleazy settings, the pounding, almost hypnotic rock score, and the subtext of addiction/disease afford the series a feeling of electricity and unpredictability. The audience is acutely aware that it is watching the death throes of a sick man, a man railing against his “terminal” illness and his impending death.

At the same time, *Werewolf* also tries to form a kind of freeflowing stance on morality in what it perceives to be an immoral world. Sometimes it does follow that old (and popular) terror TV idea of cosmic justice wherein the bad are punished (killed). Eric encounters an abusive stepdad in “The Boy Who Cried Werewolf” and kills him once he has become a werewolf. Ditto in “Running with the Pack,” in which Eric dispatches a bunch of stereotypically “evil” bikers at a diner. Yet *Werewolf* was really and truly interesting not when an “eye for an eye” was the primary modus operandi, but when Eric ascended to a new (if not higher) plane of morality. An old friend of Skorzeny’s longed to become a werewolf (and hence immortal) in “The Black Ship” and Eric was faced with a difficult choice. Should he share his curse/gift with this man? What would that make Eric if he did it? In “Nightmare at the Braine Motel,” Eric encountered a deranged werewolf and had to determine how best to deal with him and his quest for the source of his own lineage. In these stories and others, Eric always had to combat the overwhelming instinct to kill. In short, it was the loss of his humanity that

was at stake. The audience was informed in the series premiere that Eric would inevitably become less human and more animal the longer his “addiction” (lycanthropy) continued. *Werewolf* kept bringing that idea back in episode after episode, giving Eric a grim choice between suicide (and ending the curse) or losing himself and his human identity the longer he searched for Skorzeny. A continuing series subplot saw Eric opening up a local newspaper in the morning, reading of vicious murders, and wondering if he was actually the culprit. It was werewolf *noir* and the angst was well done. Many of these concepts were revisited and expanded on *Forever Knight* in 1992.

When *Werewolf* was genuinely bad, it was because formula and TV convention overtook the show’s better instincts. We all could have lived without the episode in which Eric helped a cute little old lady escape from a cruel nursing home (“Amazing Grace”) or the one in which he fell (predictably) in love with a new-age witch (“Nothing Evil in These Woods”) or even the one where he became involved as a third party in the murderous affairs of a rich family (“Blood Ties”). In these instances, the series really was just like *The Incredible Hulk*: a man-on-the-run formula show about a guy who could transform into a monster and consequently improve the life of the people he had just (conveniently) met. Worse than any of those shows, “The Boy Who Cried Werewolf” trotted out the oldest TV cliché of all: the Single Woman in Jeopardy Syndrome. In this subgenre of adventure television, the handsome hero rides into town, meets a woman and her son, and is forced to save them from the menace-of-the-week (often a father or stepfather). The Single Woman in Jeopardy cliché appeared on *Battlestar Galactica* as “The Lost Warrior,” on *Buck Rogers in the 25th Century* as “The Satyr,” on *V* as “The Wildcats,” and even once or twice on *MacGyver*. The *Werewolf* take on it repeated all the same tired notes, and added nothing new.

*Werewolf* had its share of plot contrivances. For example, Eric would always change into a werewolf just when it would do the most good and he would be able to defend/save/rescue the heroic guest star of the week. Additionally, Alamo Joe kept running into werewolves, but he was never killed or bitten, only knocked down and scratched (so the character could return the following week...). In “Amazing Grace,” believability was really strained when Eric (as a werewolf) broke out of a padded cell in a nursing home, freed all the kindly old folks incarcerated there, and then went back to terrorize the “evil doctors.” How did he manage to retain so much control that he could pick and choose who should be his victims? That question went unanswered. And how did Eric manage to avoid biting his victims and turning them into werewolves?

*Werewolf*’s half-hour length perhaps precluded the possibility of any really epic shows (those were all two-parters), but it also prevents this series from being boring or sedate, which is surely a plus. Additionally, the series plays a bit like *Miami Vice* on acid. It is a prime piece of mid-80s funk. The otherwise uninteresting “Blood Ties” is made more fun through the use of non-linear storytelling (like *Pulp Fiction* [1994], *Jackie Brown* [1997], or *Out of Sight* [1998]) techniques, an appropriate choice considering its “crime” subject matter. “Nightmare at Braine Motel” is almost avant garde in its pre-*Twin Peaks* use of bizarre symbols and characters (like the crazy woman in white, the bald werewolf in black, and the old man lying comatose in his bed). When *Werewolf* hit these and other high notes, it is like a freaky drug trip gone bad, a sleazy *Sid-and-Nancy* horror sideshow filled with interesting imagery and enough scares to keep the horror faithful tuned in. The bottom line is this: there’s something strangely compelling and fun about *Werewolf*’s unholy combination of horror mythology, TV formula, and rock music. That “man on the run” formula is a stinker, to be sure, but at least sometimes *Werewolf* transcends it in some daring and innovative ways.

## CAST AND CREDITS

*Cast:* John J. York (Eric Cord); Lance Le Gault (Alamo Joe Rogan); Chuck Connors (Janos Skorzeny).

*Credits: Created by:* Frank Lupo. *Executive Producers:* Frank Lupo, John Ashley. *Associate Producers:* Janice Cooke-Leonard, Bernadette Joyce. *Director of Photography (various episodes):* Rick Bota, Jon Kranhouse. *Production Designer:* Anthony Cowley. *Film Editors (various episodes):* Howard Deane, David Ramirez. *Story Editors:* Allan Cole and Chris Bunch. *Unit Production Manager:* F.A. Miller. *First Assistant Director:* Craig West. *Second Assistant Director:* Garry A. Brown. *Werewolf Characters Designed by:* Rick Baker. *Werewolf Makeup, Effects, and Transformations:* Greg Cannom. *Music:* Sylvester Levay. *Casting:* Victoria Burrows. *Set Decoration:* Hal Martin. *Camera Operator:* Rick Bota. *Electrical Gaffer:* Roger Olkowski. *Key Grip:* Steve Smith. *Construction Coordinator:* Robert Maisto. *Costume Supervisor:* Camile Schroeder. *Script Supervisor:* Brenda Weisman. *Makeup Artist:* Nanette MacCaughern. *Hairstylist:* Manny Montoya, Jr. *Property Master:* Paul Ahrens. *Production Sound Mixer:* Peter Bentley. *Stunt Coordinator:* Steve Boyum. *Special Effects:* Tom Bellissimo. *Werewolf Stunts:* Tony Snegoff, Alex Daniels. *Location Managers:* Bobby Howard, Jean Henley. *Transportation Coordinator:* Steve Imbler. *Production Coordinator:* Myrna Huffman. *Casting Assistant:* Diane Stanley. *Werewolf Makeup Crew:* Earl Ellis, Stuart Artingstall, Linda Notaro, Keith Edmier, Mitch Devane, Gino Crognale, Larry Odien, Camilla Henneman, John Vulich, Tony Rupprecht, Martha Vanek. *Sound Effects:* Soundelux. *Sound Effects Supervisor:* Joe Mayer. *Music Editor:* Jamie E. Gelb. *Video Editing Facilities:* Modern Video. *Color by:* Technicolor. From Tristar Television.

## EPISODE GUIDE

**1. “Werewolf”** Written by Frank Lupo; Directed by David Hemmings; airdate: July 11, 1987; *Guest Cast:* Chuck Connors (Janos Skorzeny); Raphael Sbarge (Ted Nichols); Michelle Johnson (Kelly Nichols); Ethan Phillips (Eddie Armando); Stanley Grover (Rudy Armandi); John Quade (Storage Owner); Gail O’Grady (Female Victim).

College student Eric Cord discovers that his girlfriend’s brother Ted is the monster responsible for a series of brutal dismemberments. Ted is a werewolf, and he asks Eric to shoot him with a silver bullet before he again transforms into a beast and commits murder. During the change, Eric is bitten by Ted and doomed to live a cursed life. His only chance to reverse his own metamorphosis into a werewolf is to find and sever the werewolf bloodline. Eric and Kelly go in search of sea captain Janos Skorzeny, the man who Ted thought was the originator of the werewolf curse. Because he has broken bail, Eric is pursued on his quest by a bounty hunter named Alamo Joe. When Kelly is captured by Skorzeny, Eric must utilize his new werewolf senses to save her life.

**2. “Nightwatch”** Written by Frank Lupo; Directed by David Hemmings; airdate: July 18, 1987; *Guest Cast:* Denny Miller (Captain Mueller); Henry Beckman (Gun Salesman); Grand L. Bush (Seaman); Chuck Connors (Janos Skorzeny); John Garwood (Sheriff); Frank Toth (Deputy).

After a particularly gruesome nightmare, Eric tracks Skorzeny to the shadowy boatyard at Santa Clara Harbor and begins to keep a journal. Eric then steals a service revolver and procures some silver bullets in hopes of murdering Skorzeny, but seamen capture Eric and plot to turn him over to Alamo Joe.

**3. “The Boy Who Cried Werewolf”** Written by Mark Jones; Directed by Larry Shaw; airdate: July 25, 1987; *Guest Cast:* Cyril O’Reilly (Bobby); Ann Wyndham (Leah Hayes); Danny Cooksey (Davey Hayes); Len Wayland (Dr. Miller); Matt Roc (Policeman).

Eric is wounded by Alamo Joe during a nocturnal hunt and rescued by little Davey, a fanciful little boy living alone with his mother. While Eric recovers from his wounds in a treehouse lined with horror movie posters, Davey’s mother is abused by her alcoholic boyfriend and Eric is forced to defend the family.

**4. “The Black Ship”** Written by Allan Cole and Chris Bunch; Directed by James Darren; airdate: August 1, 1987; *Guest Cast:* Stefan Gierasch (Renfield); Claude Earl Jones (Mr. Clursura); Chuck Connors (Janos Skorzeny); Lillian Garrett (Rita).

Eric meets up with Renfield, a crippled old sailor friend of Skorzeny’s. Renfield promises to help Eric, but he is, in fact, a traitor and he sets a trap for Eric in the hold of his ship.

**5. “Spectre of the Wolf”** Written by Craig Tepper; Directed by Lyndon Chubbock; airdate: August 8, 1987; *Guest Cast:* Byrne Piven (Dr. Degoethis); Paul Comi, Margaret Nagle, Thomas Stoviak, Jule Inouye (Nurse); Jay Wakeman.

Eric seeks help from a scholar, Dr. Degoethis, who has written a book about werewolf myths through the ages. The academic is hard to convince, however, especially since Alamo Joe has already warned him about Eric’s crimes.

**6. “The Wolf Who Thought He Was a Man”** Written by Allan Cole and Chris Bunch; Directed by David Hemmings; airdate: August 15, 1987; *Guest Cast:* Anthony Mockus (Hugo Forsythe); Bobbie Eakes (Margaret); Tobias Anderson (Ed); Noel Conlon (Kelly).

Beaten and exhausted, Eric accepts the hospitality of an old man with a home in the woods. He falls in love with a beautiful woman named Margaret there, and comes to fear his own animal instincts when a series of brutal murders occur.

**7. “Nothing Evil in These Woods”** Written by Sidney Ellis; Directed by David Hemmings; airdate: August 29, 1987; *Guest Cast:* Amy Yasbeck (Dierdre); Will MacMillan (Sheriff Brandt); Michael Currie (Jake); Peter Noel Duhamel (Deputy); Dana Short, Bill Dunnam.

Eric awakens in the woods after attacking two campers, and then meets up with Dierdre—a beautiful young woman who claims to be a white witch. When Dierdre and Eric begin to fall in love, Dierdre claims she can find a cure for his lycanthropy if only Eric has “faith.”

**8. “Running with the Pack”** Written by Craig Tepper; Directed by Guy Magar; airdate: September 12, 1987; *Guest Cast:* Jay Avocone (Mick); Julia Campbell (Sally); Michael Currie (Hank); Robert Drye, Lois Hall, Kevin Gage, Michelangelo Kowalski.

Eric has taken a job in the kitchen of an out-of-the-way diner belonging to two kindly old folks. When a ruthless gang attacks the diner, and a mysterious but beautiful young patron, Eric realizes that a werewolf may be the best defense.

**9. “Friendly Haven”** Written by Tom Blumquist; Directed by David Hemmings; airdate: September 26, 1987; *Guest Cast:* Bibi Osterwald (Mary Peterson); Dabbs Greer (Russell); Sunshine Parker, John C. Anders, Daniel Bryan Cartwell.

Following rumors of a bigfoot sighting, Eric sets out after Janos Skorzeny. After a ferocious battle with the stronger werewolf, Eric finds sanctuary in the home of a woman named Mary who has a strange and supernatural secret of her own.

**10. “Let Us Prey”** Written by Allan Cole and Chris Bunch; Directed by James Darren; airdate: October 3, 1987; *Guest Cast:* Stephen W. Burns (Mark); Robert Carricart, Kenneth Kimmins (Patrick); Mel Carter (Jude); David Crowley, Bert Santos.

Eric seeks safe haven in a monastery, but the monks living there are not the innocents they seem. Sometime in the past, Skorzeny made a stop at the retreat too, and shared his own eternal curse with at least one man of God.

**11. “A World of Difference” (Part I)** Written by Craig Tepper; Directed by James Darren; airdate: October 10, 1987; *Guest Cast:* Lee deBroux (Sheriff Hillman); James Morrison (Deputy Engels); Theresa Saldana (Rosa); Linden Chiles, James A. Watson, Jr.; David Froman, Eric Server (Redneck #1); David Cowgill (Deputy Lansford); Joe D’Angerio (Attendant); Virgil Frye (Drunk); Conni Marie Brazelton (Clerk); Livia Genise (Tannis); Raymond Garcia (Paramedic #1); Joseph Romeo (Another Clerk); Valerie Redding (Nurse); David Starwalt (Paramedic #2); Shep Sanders (Spirit Medium); Margaret Siblar (Fortune Teller); Brian Soules (David).

Alamo Joe catches up with Eric in a small-town jail, and then attempts to interrogate him about his transformations. Eric reveals to his pursuer that he still has hopes for a normal life, but later that night he turns into a werewolf, escapes from prison, and Alamo Joe is forced to kill him.

**12. “A World of Difference” (Part II)** Written by Craig Tepper; Directed by James Darren; airdate: October 17, 1987; *Guest Cast:* Lee deBroux (Sheriff Hillman); James Morrison (Deputy Engels); Gwen Humble (Madge); Ethan Phillips (Eddie Armando); Theresa Saldana (Rosa); Linden Chiles, Bill McLaughlin (Animal Keeper); David Cowgill (Deputy Lansford); Joe D’Angerio (Attendant); Catherine MacNeal (Intern); Valerie Redding (Nurse); Brian Soules (David).

With Eric apparently dead in the morgue, Alamo Joe recovers from his wounds in the hospital and reevaluates some of his life decisions. As Joe grows ever-fearful that he was bitten by Eric and is doomed to be a werewolf, Eric returns from the dead and breaks out of the morgue.

**13. “The Unicorn”** Written by Mark Jones; Directed by Lyndon Chubbuck; airdate: October 25, 1987; *Guest Cast:* Traci Lin (Chrissy); Tony Todd (Charlie); Jean Renee Foster (Denise); Freeman King (Ron); Rick Zumwalt (Hank).

Skorzeny has meandered to Hollywood, where he begins to murder prostitutes. Eric has followed him there, but once more he is mistaken for the killer committing the monstrous crimes.

**14. “All Hallow’s Eve”** Written by Craig Tepper; Directed by Larry Shaw; airdate: October 31, 1987; *Guest Cast:* Walter Addison (Gavin); Cami Cooper (Nancy); Bob Air (Ed); Sean Kanan, Jim Calvert, Mark Sussman, Philip Walker, Joseph Dammann, Jacklyn Bernstein, Holly Clark.



It is Halloween night, and Eric has seen the telltale pentagram on his hand which indicates he will soon become a werewolf. After leaving his temporary job at a convenience store, Eric locks himself up in a supposedly “haunted” house which is occupied by a disfigured stranger with a sad tale to share.

**15. “Blood on the Tracks”** Written by Christian Darren; Directed by Rob Bowman; airdate: November 1, 1987; *Guest Cast:* Everett McGill (Jake); Elizabeth Ruscio (Louise); Med Flory (Sheriff); Zitto Kazann, Tyler Tyhurst, Raymond O’Keefe, Jason Edwards.

While tracking Skorzeny, Eric meets his boyhood idol, a boxing champ from days long past. When mobsters threaten the champion’s family, only a werewolf can deliver the knock-out punch which will save the day.

**16. “Nightmare at the Braine Hotel”** Written by Craig Tepper; Directed by David Hemmings; airdate: November 8, 1987; *Guest Cast:* Richard Lynch (Cervant Dombault); Ellen Crawford (Marta); Jayne Modean (Blond Woman); Howard Mungo (Janitor).

Eric makes a trip to a fleabag hotel in a town where a slasher has claimed seven victims. He meets a suspicious man dressed in black, an old hotel clerk, a young lady with a sick father, and other bizarre denizens before learning that the man in black was born in 1468 and is a fellow werewolf.

**17. “Wolfhunt”** Written by Allan Cole and Chris Brunch; Directed by Robert Bralver; airdate: November 15, 1987; *Guest Cast:* George McDaniel (Tillman); Juquin Martinez (Morales).

Eric runs into poachers who are capturing and killing wolves. Alamo Joe tracks Eric, and incites a wolfhunter to seek a more deadly prey: a werewolf.

**18. “Blood Ties”** Written by Christian Darren; Directed by David Hemmings; airdate: November 22, 1987; *Guest Cast:* Catherine Hickland (Lila Storm); James Horan (Ray Storm); Peg Stewart (Evelyn Storm); Joseph Whipp (Detective); Larry Friel (Officer).

Working on the property of the wealthy Storms, Eric befriends kindly old grandmother Storm. Her grandson-in-law plots to kill her so as to inherit her fortune, and Eric is targeted as the prime suspect.

**19. “Big Daddy”** Written by Allan Cole and Chris Bunch; Directed by Larry Shaw; airdate: November 29, 1987; *Guest Cast:* Howard Duff (Will “Big Daddy” Fraser); Jonelle Allen (Emily); Brian Libby (Bobby LaCroix).

Eric is trapped at a roadblock by “Big Daddy” Fraser, a crooked Southern political boss. “Big Daddy” is dying of cancer and is desperate to live ... so desperate that he wants to be bitten by a werewolf and be made immortal.

**20. “Eye of the Storm”** Written by Tom Blomquist; Directed by Sidney Hayers; airdate: December 6, 1987; *Guest Cast:* Robin Greer, David Haywood, Lori Lethin, Leon Rippey, Sheila Pinkham.

At an isolated resort, Eric joins a group of murder suspects. Desperate to escape before being caught for his own crimes, Eric does some investigating and realizes that the murders have more to do with the law than with werewolves.

**21. “Nightmare in Blue”** Written by Allan Cole and Chris Bunch; Directed by David Hemmings;

airdate: January 17, 1988; *Guest Cast*: Gregg Henry (Officer/Stalker); Toni Byrd (Gertrude); Mike Gomez (Officer Lopez); Terry Wills (Policeman).

While hitchhiking through a small town, Eric is unexpectedly accosted, shot, and buried alive by a maniacal police officer. Because of his werewolf strength, Eric survives the attack and realizes that his nemesis is no cop, but a deranged wannabe who is murdering vagrants indiscriminately.

**22. “Skinwalker”** Written by Christian Darren; Directed by Rob Bowman; airdate: January 24, 1988; *Guest Cast*: Dehl Berti (Mr. Indochine); Patrick Bishop (George); Gloria Hayes (Marie); Henry Kingi (Roosevelt); Eric Hart (Gus McGregor); Don Shanks, Jimmie F. Skaggs.

A Native American man is killed by a werewolf, and Alamo Joe suspects that Eric is the murderer. The Navahos, however, believe that a skinwalker, a shape-shifting witch, is to blame, and one Indian informs Eric that there is a cure, a purification process, for men doomed with the werewolf curse.

**23. “King of the Road”** Written by Allan Cole and Chris Bunch; Directed by Richard Colla; airdate: February 7, 1988; *Guest Cast*: Henry Beckman (Doc); Guy Stockwell (Hank); Sid Haig (Bud); Tony D. Fields (Fresno); Marco Rodriguez (Bum).

Eric jumps a train with a bunch of hobos during his continuing search for Skorzeny. The bums are less than friendly towards him, and their attitude does not improve when one of their number is mauled and killed while they sleep.

**24. “A Material Girl”** Written by Allan Cole and Chris Bunch; Directed by James Darren; airdate: February 14, 1988; *Guest Cast*: Lisanne Falk, Noah Blake, Stuart Franklin.

The quest for Janos Skorzeny continues for Eric following the brutal murder of two rock-n-roll hopefuls. Eric protects the denizens of an apartment slum from the one-eyed werewolf.

**25. “To Dream of Wolves” (Part I)** Written by Allan Cole and Chris Bunch; Directed by Richard Colla; airdate: February 21, 1988; *Guest Cast*: Brian Thompson (Nicholas Remy); Kim Ulrich (Diane); Alex Daniels (Mime); Todd Bryant (Young Skorzeny); Ben Zeller (Bob Phillips); Paul Bryant (Piano Player); Nancy Belle Reid (Blind Woman).

In the French Quarter of New Orleans, Eric teams up with a female photographer in his quest to locate and kill Skorzeny. The trail leads to Professor Nicholas Remy, a prominent economist and politician, and finally to a deadly showdown and revelation that Skorzeny is *not* the beginning of Eric’s werewolf bloodline.

**26. “To Dream of Wolves” (Part II)** Written by Allan Cole and Chris Bunch; Directed by James Darren; airdate: February 28, 1988; *Guest Cast*: Brian Thompson (Nicholas Remy); Kim Ulrich (Diane); Ron O’Neal (Delaney); Deborah Green (Singer); Wayne Brennan (Peasant).

Eric escapes the deadly trap laid by Remy and the duplicitous Diane while Alamo Joe continues to hunt him down with the help of a police detective. Eric confronts Remy, learning of his long history as an inquisitor in the Middle Ages and as an S.S. officer in World War II, and the two men/werewolves fight for survival in Remy’s home.

**27. “Blind Luck”** Written by Dennis R. Foley; Directed by Jon Pare; airdate: March 6, 1988; *Guest Cast*: Cheryl McManus (Sylvia); Marshall Teague (Austin); April Giuffria (Janet); Michael Flynn (Policeman).

At a carnival, Eric befriends a beautiful blind woman with a talent for trick shooting. He is horrified to learn that her husband-to-be is planning to kill her and collect the resulting insurance money.

**28. “Gray Wolf”** Written by Norman Spinrad; Directed by James Darren; March 13, 1988; *Guest Cast*: Brian Thompson (Nicholas Remy); Larry Drake; W. Morgan Sheppard, John Dempsey.

In a junkyard, Eric teams up with an elderly man, in reality a “gray” werewolf like himself, to kill Nicholas Remy. Eric’s new companion, however, has a hunger for flesh, and Eric disagrees with him about how best to live with the werewolf curse.

**29. “Amazing Grace”** Written by Allan Cole and Chris Bunch; Directed by Richard Colla; airdate: May 22, 1988; *Guest Cast*: Billie Bird (Grace Sullivan); J. Patrick McNamara (Doctor); Eileen Barnett, Nancy Fish, R.D. Kennedy (Richard Canfield); Nancy Borgenicht (Karen Eisenberg); David Kirk Chambers (Armus); Curley Green, Jr. (Phillip); Anthony Legar (Ian); Russ McGinn (Neal); Theron Read (Freddie).

Nobody believes crazy old Grace when she claims to have seen a werewolf in a dark alley, so her insensitive daughter has her committed to a badly run insane asylum/nursing home. Feeling guilty over the misunderstanding, Eric tries to help Grace escape the looney bin and takes a job as custodian at the hospital so as to watch over her.

## *Friday the 13th: The Series (1987–1990)*

### CRITICAL RECEPTION

“a terrific Saturday turn for teenagers ... and for adults who like jumpy moments, good atmosphere and a *Lights Out!*-like story. Le May and Robey are good ... and the effects are keen ... a successful terror tease blissfully devoid of blood and full of the supernatural and imagination.”—*Variety*, October 14, 1987, page 208.

“The show seemed doomed from the start by its misjudged title—after all, only rabid slasher fans are likely to tune in, and they’d be sorely disappointed by the programme’s lame brand of shocks’n’scares mixed in with light comedy. Jason must be turning in his grave—one of them.”—*Starburst*, Volume 10, Number 10: “TV News,” June 1988, page 6.

“Each week three continuing characters try to retrieve one of the [cursed] objects before it wreaks its supernatural havoc. That serviceable premise provides the excuse for segments that range from old horror chestnuts (the ventriloquist controlled by his dummy) to spooky original tales (two abused children lure playmates into an evil playhouse) ... *Friday the 13th*’s worst sin is an obsession with clunky, overexplanatory dialogue ... but the show delivers a stronger dose of pure horror than anything else on TV.”—Richard Zoglin, *Time*, November 6, 1989, page 90.

### FORMAT

Lewis Vendredi (French for “Friday”—get it?) is a man who wanted things both ways. He wanted to be immortal, so he made a pact with Satan. Then, he tried to back out of the deal and paid for his treachery with his life. Sadly, Vendredi left behind a real mess when he was dragged down to hell and everlasting torment. All the antiques in his curio shop are cursed, devilish things with an appetite for death and a hunger for destruction.

Enter Vendredi’s beautiful niece Micki and her cousin, Ryan. They have inherited more than Vendredi’s estate. They’ve inherited *big* problems. They must now go back and retrieve every antique that Vendredi sold. If they don’t, people will die. Lots of people. Ryan and Micki are assisted in this quest by the knowledgeable older gentleman, Jack Marshak, a former friend of Vendredi’s. An expert in forgery, the occult, history, and science, Marshak helps Micki and Ryan get in and out of difficult-to-penetrate places like monasteries and rock concerts.

In just about every episode of this sixty-minute horror adventure, the trio from the “Curious Goods” antique shop must retrieve a cursed collectible of some kind. One week that antique could be a murderous doll (“The Inheritance”), a tea cup which gives youth to its aging owner (“A Cup of Time”), or a cursed compact which makes the owner appear beautiful (“Vanity’s Mirror”) and the following week it could be a red weed-mulcher from hell (“The Root of All Evil”) or a two-faced painting which was a portal through time (“The Charnel Pit”).

The adventure begins each week on this series as the camera enters the Curious Goods shop and takes a brief point-of-view tour of the cluttered store. A toy monkey waves to the audience, a ghostly

apparition can be seen in a mirror, and finally the camera settles on a large crystal jar. The jar shatters suddenly and the title *Friday the 13th: The Series* wafts out of the remains, as if a ghost freed from entrapment.

Over the course of the three-year run of *Friday the 13th*, more is learned about the starring troika. Ryan is a comic book fan (“Tales of the Undead”) with a taste for rock music and an unrequited crush on Micki. Micki is initially a bit haughty and arrogant, but she becomes less irritating as the series progresses. At first, Micki is engaged to an obnoxious attorney named Lloyd, but the relationship ends badly by the middle of the first season. If one had to categorize the heroes of this series, the childlike Ryan would be the believer, the romantic, and the red-haired Micki is the skeptic and the complainer (at least early on).

*Friday the 13th* aired for three successful years in syndication. In the final year, Ryan was written out of the show (after a confrontation with the devil which turned him into a child) and replaced by the heroically named Johnny Ventura (Steven Monarque). The weekly task, however, remained the same: collect those damned (literally!) antiques.

## HISTORY

*Friday the 13th* (1980) surprised nearly everybody in the movie industry when it became one of the top grossing genre films of the year (just behind *The Empire Strikes Back*). Sean Cunningham, producer of Wes Craven’s first feature, *The Last House on the Left* (1972), directed this *Halloween* (1978) knock-off about a mad slasher (Mrs. Voorhees) killing off the promiscuous camp counselors at Crystal Lake in revenge for the drowning death of her malformed son, Jason. So popular was this horror movie that eight sequels followed in the eighties and early nineties, including *Part II* (1981), *Part III in 3-D* (1983), *The Final Chapter* (1984), *A New Beginning* (1985), *Jason Lives* (1986), *The New Blood* (1987), *Jason Takes Manhattan* (1989), and *Jason Goes to Hell* (1993). Amazingly, each sequel in this slasher franchise repeated almost verbatim the exact plot of the first picture, but with the hockey-masked Jason (rather than his dear old Mom) offing a new batch of fresh-faced, able-bodied counselors with his trusted machete. So repetitive was the formula of *Friday the 13th* that Roger Ebert dubbed the films “Dead Teenager” movies, and noted that each picture in the series was virtually interchangeable. All this criticism was irrelevant to Paramount Pictures and production executive Frank Mancuso Jr., who clearly had a cash cow on their (bloody) hands. After all, the *Friday the 13th* pictures were cheap, required no high-priced stars, and instantly made profits (usually in their big opening weekend) even before they picked up *more* money on the home video market (where they were a staple for teenage parties). *Friday the 13th* pictures also proved a training ground for future stars such as Kevin Bacon and Crispin Glover.

In 1987, Paramount was venturing into the world of syndicated TV with *Star Trek: The Next Generation*. This follow-up to the original *Star Trek* had an unusual companion piece, a spin-off from Paramount’s *other* successful franchise: *Friday the 13th*. When it became obvious that a machete-wielding, hockey-mask-wearing psychopath who murdered teens could not be the star of a weekly series, Frank Mancuso was forced to reform the property and develop a new concept, which meant, in essence, that the new show would be a continuation of the feature films in name only. In other words, the *Friday the 13th* moniker was a hook, a lure to fans of the films, in hopes that they would try the new series, and then (hopefully) stick with it once they’d sampled it a few times. Instead of a mass murderer, *Friday the 13th: The Series*, as it became known, featured a trio of protagonists who were cursed to recover haunted antiques with murderous Satanic capabilities. Shot in Canada with a budget

of less than 500,000 dollars per episode,<sup>1</sup> the series starred Robey, a beautiful red-headed model, virtual unknown John Le May, and the series' elder statesman, Chris Wiggins as jack of all trades, Jack Marshak. Although some watchers certainly felt as if they'd viewed the series under false pretenses, *Friday the 13th* quickly became the second highest ranked syndicated drama on the air, fetching particularly high viewing numbers (a staggering 5.9 share) thanks to viewership from males, age 18-49. This number may sound low to some, but today, most of the WB shows (including *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* and *Charmed*) are considered hits and their ratings are significantly lower than 5.9.

As for the series itself, it specialized in the dramatization of a certain type of character: the loser. Most weeks, a down-on-his luck outsider who was ugly, poor, crippled, or similarly wretched found him/herself in possession of a demonic antique which could rectify the (sometimes only perceived) personality deficiency. As story editor Jim Henshaw described the format:

We're trying to deal with Faustian obsessions, trying to get inside the villains and their obsessions, and their victims, too. We're trying to raise some kind of moral dilemma each episode, to introduce moral ambiguities. We're trying to be scary in areas people don't normally look at for horror.<sup>2</sup>

While this approach was interesting because it really was a weekly regurgitation of Faust legend, too much of anything, even a concept with literary antecedents, is not necessarily a good or entertaining thing. The *Friday the 13th: The Series* formula became so repetitive (as the feature films had been before it) that one could almost set one's watch by the weekly proceedings: discovery of the "bad" antique, use of cursed antique, recovery of cursed antique—gore, gore, gore! More damaging, however, were early reports coming off the set in Toronto which indicated that a behind-the-scenes war was in process over the heart and soul of *Friday the 13th: The Series*:

The show is getting screwed up left and right.... There is a conflict about whether the show should be effects-heavy or not. We had story editors overriding us on the special effects and claiming they were in charge. There is a complete lack of communication on the show, and it is being totally mismanaged ... the effects on the show have been uniformly bad.<sup>3</sup>

Though some of these assertions may have been true, the final one, about the quality of the special effects, was exaggerated. *Friday the 13th: The Series* was quite adept with horrific effects, though a flying guillotine in an early show ("The Poison Pen") was not rendered very believably. Whatever its problems, *Friday the 13th: The Series* survived its first season tumult and was renewed for a second year. Robey quickly became a cult star in horror circles, a new brand of damsel in distress, and the series itself featured good guest appearances from prominent celebrities such as Keye Luke ("Tattoo"), Ray Walston ("Tales of the Undead"), Michael Constantine ("Pipe Dream"), Vanity ("Mesmer's Bauble"), and Fritz Weaver ("The Prophecies"). Denis Forest and Kate Trotter were two perennial performers on the show, each showing up in more than three programs, and they were quite interesting in a variety of villainous "loser" roles. Future *Forever Knight* stars Catherine Disher ("Double Exposure") and Nigel Bennett ("The Butcher") weighed in on the series, as did R.G. Armstrong as the villainous Vendredi. In years to come, Armstrong would become better known as the "Old Man," the guru of the Millennium Group, on Chris Carter's *Millennium*. Stories on the series came from Rob Hedden, Marc Scott Zicree, Jim Henshaw, and others who had a working knowledge of the genre. Directors included Atom Egoyan (who recently won praise for his 1997 film *The Sweet Hereafter*), William Fruet, Armand Mastroianni (*Nightmare Cafe*, the new *Dark Shadows*), Timothy

Bond (*Star Trek: The Next Generation*), and one story (“Faith Healer”) was even directed by horror legend David Cronenberg! What resulted overall was a very predictable, highly repetitive show with some visual and horrific stand outs. Not a great show, but not a terrible one either.

Cast changes were in the offing for season three, with Le May’s Ryan replaced by Monarque’s more dashing Johnny Ventura. A concerted effort was made to inject new life, pace, and ideas into the formula, and the attempt was successful creatively, if not in the ratings game. Despite the changes, *Friday the 13th: The Series* was canceled by Paramount at the end of its third year, along with Paramount’s other non-*Trek* entry, *War of the Worlds* (1988–1990). Today, *Friday the 13th: The Series* appears regularly on the Sci-Fi Channel, and its personnel have gone on to bigger and better things. Fred Mollins, composer of the theme music, scored *Beyond Reality* and *Forever Knight*. Director of photography Rodney Charters also moved on to *Forever Knight*, and director William Fruet has found gainful employment directing episodes of *Poltergeist: The Legacy*. Considering the fact that so many of its crew has continued to impact horror television, *Friday the 13th: The Series* is valuable as a training ground for new talent, if for little advancement in the realm of storytelling.

### CRITICAL COMMENTARY

*Friday the 13th: The Series* is an excellent example of a terror TV series with a terrific concept, but flawed execution. The writers/creators of this late ’80s horror adventure found an excellent premise, filled with valid and even daring thematic possibilities, but then opted to probe the same story again and again, week after week, month after month. Admittedly, that story is a good one, an interesting one, but who wants to see literally the same thing seventy times? Because of excessive repetition, *Friday the 13th: The Series* is one of the most boring horror shows imaginable.

But there is that good premise at the heart of this syndicated mayhem, and it is worth examining. The bottom line on *Friday the 13th: The Series* is always the weakness of the human spirit. Each episode depicts a scenario in which a human being intentionally opts for a selfish path over a selfless one. A doctor at a mental institute wants to be famous and successful in her career, so she makes human sacrifices to a cursed radio to attain that goal (“And Now the News”). A yuppie woman has everything she could want out of life except a healthy child, and a cursed cradle gives her that too ... if only she is willing to kill seven innocent people (“What a Mother Wouldn’t Do”). A victimized teenage girl does not want to be a plain Jane anymore and will be perceived as beautiful thanks to a cursed compact, but she must kill those she loves to get what she wants (“Vanity’s Mirror”). A gardener wants to be wealthy, and a demonic mulcher obligingly spits out large sums of cash if the poor man feeds it live people (“The Root of All Evil”). A crippled girl wants to walk again, but she has to kill to do it (“Crippled Inside”). Another woman wants to get married, but again, has to kill to get her wish (“Wedding Bell Blues”).

The story is always the same, whether the guest star is playing a teenager, a yuppie, a loser, an outsider, or a career professional; it’s all about greed and materialism. The series seems to state that all human beings are greedy and willing to step over (and kill) others for the shot to get what we want or think we deserve out of life. Considering this theme, and the interesting time the series was produced (1987-90), it is not difficult to view the central format of *Friday the 13th: The Series* as another reflection of the yuppie era, and the Reagan Revolution. The goal of that time was “upward mobility,” riches, and “me, me, me.” *Friday the 13th: The Series*, though shot in Canada, reflects this time in American history by exposing the greed of our citizenry in purely horror terms. Here, people are willing to make a deal with the devil to achieve the things that life has not given them. That the

tool of the devil is a thing itself, a belonging, an antique to be bought and sold, captures perfectly the rampant materialism of the era. The entire series is really about buying success and selling your soul in the process. Capitalism of the spirit is fatal, one could say of *Friday the 13th's* central tenet.

*Friday the 13th: The Series* thoroughly mines this premise, and deserves some credit for being among the first non-anthology horror shows to follow *Kolchak: The Night Stalker* (the other being *Werewolf*). Still, there is no denying that this series has its share of problems. There is a disturbing laziness in the plot structures of many episodes. Too many stories involve the tragic death of the protagonists' loved ones or close acquaintances. Micki loses a roommate in "Better Off Dead," and a lover in "Master of Disguise." Jack loses a son in "Bottle of Dreams," a lover and fiancée in "Brain Drain," a niece in "Symphony in B#," and old war buddies in "The Butcher." Ryan loses a girlfriend in "Double Exposure," his father in "Pipe Dream," another girlfriend in "Wax Magic," an idol in "Tales of the Undead," and even his favorite rock star in "Mesmer's Bauble." The recurrence of this plot point seems to indicate that the writers were not willing to find new and interesting characters for the Curious Goods troika to interact with. Instead, an off-screen, instantly recognizable relationship was established immediately (sibling, parent, lover) so that it could all be taken away at the climax to provide shock and horror. In one episode ("Double Exposure"), Ryan commented that "it isn't the objects that are cursed, we are ... everyone who comes near us dies." He was not far wrong, but the constant introduction of disposable "important" people basically removed all levity from the show. All the aforementioned programs ended with either Ryan, Jack, or Micki sitting in the dark Curious Goods store in mourning over their loss, while the other two tried to cheer up the saddened member of the group. Although it is nice that the show dared to avoid happy endings, *Friday the 13th: The Series* came off as excessively grim. This continual "loss" of friends and family also passed for character development on the show. Though Le May, Monarque, Robey, and Wiggins all did their best to bring verisimilitude to the program, they were rarely handed scripts which allowed them to shine ... or even glimmer. Of all the stars, Robey and Wiggins probably fared best. Micki developed more competence as the series wore on, and she had a kind of compassion and curiosity about things that could be fetching at times. As for Wiggins, he was the scene stealer of *Friday the 13th* and also played the most interesting character. Jack was a philosopher/fighter/father-figure/con artist/magician/historian/expert in the occult, and that "big" description gave Wiggins plenty of room to maneuver through tepid storylines. Le May was fine as Ryan, but his character never evolved much beyond a characterization as a kind of lovable dweeb. Monarque was an improvement, but his character was only in one season of the show and therefore did not have much time to develop. What really made all of these characters less than compelling was the fact that they seemed to be acting in molasses. The audience was always three steps ahead of these characters, and frustration was a common factor as Micki and Ryan failed to put two and two together in time to save their threatened "friend" of the week. This reviewer enjoys the fact that Micki and Ryan are just two "regular" people fighting evil, not Slayers, not F.B.I. agents, not parapsychologists, not vampire cops, but did they have to be so stupid, so continually slow-witted?

Storywise, *Friday the 13th: The Series* made some attempts to hide the fact it simply told the same "deal with the devil" story over and over. One trick was to vary its settings in an interesting manner, sending the trio after antiques in arenas like hospitals ("Dr. Jack"), monasteries ("The Poison Pen"), a pseudo-Amish community ("The Quilt of Hathor"), prison ("The Prisoner"), a lighthouse ("The Pirate's Promise"), the boxing ring ("Shadow Boxer"), a Druid cult ("Tree of Life"), and so forth. After a while, however, even this little bit of visual variation was not enough to enliven the show. In fairness, the third season attempted to rectify the situation by doing things a bit differently. "The Long Road Home" began *in medias res*, as Johnny and Micki were finishing up their recovery of an antique.



The twist in the tale came when the heroes were forced to use the cursed antique themselves during the climax—that rarely happened in the show. In other stories, such as “Demon Hunter,” the series finally moved away from human opportunism as the villain of the week and featured a long-haired demon with mottled skin and vicious claws. Another third season episode involved time travel (“The Charnel Pit”), and so forth ... so it appears some effort was being made to remedy the boredom factor.

Still, any show that lasts three years is bound to produce some winners, and *Friday the 13th: The Series* is no exception. Many of its episodes demonstrated a remarkable amount of skill in conveying effective horror imagery. “Scarecrow,” for instance, is a beautifully rendered program which is lensed entirely in autumnal browns and reds. The setting is a New England farming community and small town, and there are plenty of vivid, colorful shots of leaves on the ground, unattended buildings aging and decaying on the farm landscape, and of big, open sky. Beyond the expertly delineated setting, “Scarecrow” features one of the most horrific opening sequences yet seen on TV (up to that time.) A little boy whose mother has just died watches in horror as an ambulatory, featureless scarecrow brutally decapitates his father with a scythe. The audience even sees the severed head and a blood pool stain the floor. This gruesome moment is followed up later in the show with a very suspenseful sequence wherein Micki is locked in a Victorian bedroom (at a bed and breakfast) with the murderous scarecrow. This is one occasion where the horror, like the scarecrow, really comes to life.

“The Electrocuter” is another venture filled with stylish touches. The opening scene is lensed in grainy film stock, and black-and-white film. The audience is led through a grim penitentiary as a convict is dragged to his execution. Hulking shadows of prison guards (escorting the convict to the chair) dance across a plain white wall like ghosts, phantoms from the past in some hellish dimension. Meanwhile, a clock ticks away the seconds on the stark wall as the rendezvous with death grows closer. The rest of the story is rather silly, about a cursed electric chair which is being used by a dentist (?), but this opening segment has a kind of raw power to it. The moment of execution is tangible, and we seem to have access to scene which is one part nightmare, one part documentary.

In “Tales of the Undead,” a comic book character called “Ferrus” comes to life to help a lonely, disenchanted kid defeat his enemies and tormentors. The effects technique of the metamorphosis from meek man to monstrous machine nicely echoes the comic book motif of the show. As the transformation begins, the live action component of the show is abandoned, replaced by comic book illustrations, frames actually, of the events portrayed. The murders in this show are also depicted as excerpts from a comic book, and it is delightful and interesting to see series protagonists Micki and Ryan rendered in comic book form. There is also a great shot late in “Tales of the Undead” which is evocative of comic book style: the giant robot descends slowly in an open elevator, a vanquished foe lying slain at his feet.

The creators and writers of *Friday the 13th: The Series* clearly had a workable knowledge of the genre, and their love of it contributed some nice moments to other stories. In “The Playhouse,” Ryan and Micki are trapped in a backyard playhouse which happens to be an exact duplicate of Norman Bates’ home in the film *Psycho* (1960)! The missing children who are the focal point of this episode come from a town called Perkinsville (à la Anthony Perkins, star of *Psycho*). And, the local bar is named “Bates.” The aforementioned “Tales of the Undead” is fun in the same way. A comic book store owner is named Charlie Evans after the lead character in the *Star Trek* first season episode “Charlie X.” This show also displays *Star Wars* comics, a Godzilla figurine, and a *Robotech* cardboard stand-up. “Baron’s Bride” is another show filled with in-jokes as Ryan and Micki travel back in time in pursuit

of a vampire and end up meeting the legendary Bram Stoker.

In its three years on the air, *Friday the 13th* visited just about every terror trope imaginable: the evil doll (“The Inheritance”), Jack the Ripper (“Doctor Jack”), the Picture of Dorian Gray (“A Cup of Time”), evil tattoos (“Tattoo”), wax museums (“Wax Magic”), Druids (“The Tree of Life”), ventriloquist dummies (“Read My Lips”), demons (“Demon Hunter”), vampires (“Baron’s Blood”), damned souls (“Wedding in Black”), hillbilly horror (“The Long Road Home”) and even the Marquis de Sade (“The Charnel Pit”). It tackled these commonly seen ideas with satisfactory, if not great, results. This show will never be mistaken for *The X-Files* (though it does feature a red-headed woman and her male partner in pursuit of evil), because it lacks the wit, humor, and self-acknowledging humor of that Chris Carter masterpiece. Instead, *Friday the 13th* is a straight-faced horror show which is good for a look every now and then, but is rarely innovative. The show is *not* terrible, except on a few occasions (such as “Badge of Honor,” a police drama that attempts to ape the “hip” film style of *Miami Vice* right down to a slow-motion finale and Jan Hammer-like music on the soundtrack), merely mediocre. As with the *Friday the 13th* films, it is safe to assert that if you’ve seen one episode of this series, you’ve seen it all.

## CAST AND CREDITS

*Cast:* Robey (Micki Foster); Chris Wiggins (Jack Marshak); **Seasons 1 and 2:** John D. Le May (Ryan Dallian); **Third Season:** Steven Monarque (Johnny Ventura).

*Credits:* *Created by:* Larry Williams, Frank Mancuso, Jr. *Produced by:* Iain Paterson. *Executive Producer:* Frank Mancuso, Jr. *Line Producer:* J. Miles Dale. *Executive Story Editor:* William Taub. *Story Editor (various episodes):* Ann MacNaughton, Roy Sallows, Marc Scott Zicree. *Story Consultant:* Rob Hedden. *Supervising Executive for Hometown Films:* Barbara Sachs. *Music composed and performed by:* Fred Mollins. *Casting:* Dierdre Bowen. *Los Angeles Casting:* Fern Champion, Pamela Basker. *Associate:* Sue Swan. *Director of Photography:* Rodney Charters. *Production Designer:* Carol Spier. *Supervising Sound Editor:* Ronald Sanders. *First Assistant Director:* Mac Bradden. *Editor:* Gary L. Smith. *Assistant Production Manager:* Adam J. Shully. *Second Assistant Director:* Sam Mahony. *Art Director:* Stephen Roloff. *Costume Designer:* Aude Bronson-Howard. *Visual Effects Designer:* Michael Lennick. *Special Effects:* Frank Carere. *Script Supervisor:* Paule Mercier. *Assistant Camera Operator:* Patrick Stephen. *Sound Recordist:* Gabor Vadnay. *Boom Operator:* Francois Perrier. *Location Manager:* Robin Rockett. *Production Coordinator:* Fran Solomon. *Production Accountant:* Dawn Macnair. *Assistant Coordinator:* Carole Rosenberg. *Stunt Coordinator:* The Stunt Team. *Gaffer:* Frank Merino. *Best Boy:* Owen Taylor. *Key Grip:* Carlo Campana. *Dolly Grip:* Ian Taylor. *Assistant Art Director:* Adam Kolodziej. *Supervising Set Decorator:* Rose Galbraith. *Set Decorator:* Marlene Puritt. *Lead Set Dressers:* Kim Steede, Alexandra Anthony. *Property Master:* Juanita Holden. *Lead Props:* Alex Kitschera. *Wardrobe Mistress:* Constance Buck. *Makeup Artist:* Ava Stone. *Hair Stylist:* Jennifer Bower. *Construction Coordinator:* Jake DeVilliers. *Key Scenic Artist:* Jack Oliver. *Transportation Coordinator:* Brenda Sportun. *Sound Supervisor:* Nolan Robert. *Sound Mixer:* Robin Short. *Sound Editor:* Alban Streeter. *Third Assistant Director:* Myron Hoffert. *Assistant to Producer:* Tracy Kennedy. *Unit Manager:* Sandra Delaney. *Automobiles:* AI International. A Variety Artists Production. Produced in Association with Lexicon Productions Limited and Hometown Films.

## EPISODE GUIDE

**1. “The Inheritance”** Written by William Taub; Directed by William Fruet; airdate October 3, 1987; *Guest Cast:* R.G. Armstrong (Uncle Lewis Vendredi); Sarah Polley (Mary Simms); Lynne Cormack (Mrs. Simms); Michael Fletcher (Mr. Simms); Esther Hockin (Babysitter); Sean Fagan (Boy #1); Gordon Woolvett (Boy #2); Robyn Sheppard (Nurse); Barclay Hope (Lloyd).

Lewis Vendredi owns a chi-chi antique shop, but the priceless and eclectic treasures to be found inside all share one thing in common: they are evil, demonic, cursed things that will haunt any unlucky owner. When Lewis disappears permanently from the basement of his shop, his niece Micki Foster and her cousin Ryan Dallian take ownership of the store and discover a detailed record or manifest of all the items Vendredi sold. Later, Micki and Ryan begin to sell the contents of their uncle’s store, including a murderous porcelain doll who secretly has the ability to speak ... and the propensity to kill. Micki and Ryan then meet Jack Marshak, a boyhood friend of Vendredi’s, who is familiar with the netherworld and who insists that all the antiques, including the doll, must be retrieved because of a pact Vendredi made with Satan.

**2. “The Poison Pen”** Written by Dunford King; Directed by Timothy Bond; airdate: October 10, 1987; *Guest Cast:* Colin Fox (Rupert Seldon/Abbot LaCroix); Larry Reynolds (Brother Currie); Alar Aedma (Brother Drake); Lewis Gordon (Abbot Capliano); Gillie Fenwick (Brother Arrupe); Jayne Heeley (Reporter #1); Les Niremberg (Reporter #2); Ron Gabriel (Marvin Green).

Somebody at the Eternal Brotherhood monastery is planning to sell the land it is built on, and resorts to murder to keep his plan a secret. In this case, the murder weapon is a cursed quill pen from the Vendredi antique store. Micki, disguised as a man, and Ryan pose as Brothers Matthew and Simon to retrieve the poison pen before it is responsible for further deaths. Unfortunately, the pen’s current owner, Brother Currie, is cloistered in seclusion and virtually unreachable until he writes another deadly epitaph with the demonic implement.

**3. “Cupid’s Quiver”** Written by Stephen Katz; Directed by Atom Egoyan; airdate: October 17, 1987; *Guest Cast:* Denis Forest (Eddie Monroe); Carolyn Dunn (Lori Warren); Kirsten Kieferle (Bar Girl); Ross Fraser (Hastings); Kevin Lund (Bowser); Dennis Fitzgerald (Harold); Jo Boushel (Redhead); Ardon Bass (Hotel Manager); Peter Faussett (Frat Member); Matt Trueman (Alex); Richard Alden (Security Guard); Patrick Tierney (Bartender); Victor Ertmanis (Jock).

A plain-looking man, unlucky in love, deploys cupid’s arrow, a cursed statue, to make himself irresistible to beautiful women. After making love to an affected woman, he is arrested and the Cupid of Malek, made in Milan in 1493, switches hands. The trio from Curious Goods goes in search of the lost statue and discover it has fallen into the possession of a college fraternity. Another lovelorn boy, Eddie, plans to use the statue to win the affections of a coed he’s been stalking.

**4. “A Cup of Time”** Written by Barbara Turner Sash; Directed by F. Harvey Frost; airdate: October 24, 1987; *Guest Cast:* Hilary Shephard (Sarah Burrell/Lady Di); Maxine Miller (Birdie); Lubomir Myktiuk (Langley); Lisa Jakub (Kristen); Richard Fitzpatrick (Lt. Fishbein); Brian Young (Drifter); Ann Cornish (Sarah); Eric Wood (Runaway); Bruce Vavarina (Young Bum); Tim Burd (Teddy); Jan Phillip (David Kay); Walter Bolton (Coroner); Karen Hines (Punk).

Several homeless people have been strangled in a park near Curious Goods, and Ryan and Micki go to

the police on behalf of their social worker friend, Birdie, to find out more about the crimes. They soon realize that another of Uncle Lewis's cursed antiques is involved, this time a porcelain tea cup decorated with Swapper's Ivy (a 14th-century Irish plant rumored to make a user's wishes come true). Sarah Burrell, a rock star also known as "Lady Di," is using the evil cup, trading the lives of the homeless for her youth. Realizing that Sarah is giving a benefit concert for the homeless in the park, Micki and Ryan set out to get the cup of time back, unaware that Birdie actually wants it for herself.

**5. "Hellowe'en"** Written by William Taub; Directed by Timothy Bond; airdate: October 31, 1987; *Guest Cast:* R.G. Armstrong (Uncle Lewis); Adrian Pockock (Greta); Victoria Deslaurier (Evil Greta); Devid Matheson (Larry); Alan Watt (Howard); Maxwell Moffatt (Old Man); Braun McAsh (B.T.); Tom Melisois (Erick); Ron Vanhart (Hearse Driver).

It is Halloween night, and Ryan throws a costume party inside the Curious Goods shop. Two guests ignore Ryan's "off-limits" sign and sneak into the vault, where they turn off the lights and plunge the party into darkness. The pranksters conjure up a spirit from a crystal ball: the spirit of Uncle Lewis! While Jack helps an errant trick-or-treater (really a disguised demon) find her way home, Lewis attempts to trick Ryan and Micki into stealing him a new life with the aid of a sacred, cursed amulet.

**6. "The Great Montarro"** Written by Durnford King; Directed by Richard Friedman; airdate: November 7, 1987; *Guest Cast:* Graeme Campbell (The Magnificent Montarro); Lesleh Donaldson (Lyla); August Schellenberg (The Great Fahteem/Harvey Ringwald); Sylvia Garant (Collette); Martin Neufeld (Robert/ Miranda); Murray Westgate (Monte); Jefferson Mappin (Tommy); Ric Sarabia (Tony).

An illusionist, Fahteem the Great, is killed in a freak accident ... actually a murder ... that involves the prop known as the cabinet of doom. When Jack learns of the incident, he realizes that another antique, a cursed magic casket sold to one Harvey Ringwald years earlier, is responsible. Soon another magician, the Magnificent Montarro, shows up at the Temple of Magic with the evil antique under his control. Because of the temple's restrictive rules about outsiders, Jack enters a contest as a magician and Ryan and Micki serve as his assistants while also searching for the cabinet of death.

**7. "Doctor Jack"** Written by Marc Scott Zicree; Directed by Richard Friedman; airdate: November 14, 1987; *Guest Cast:* Cliff Gorman (Dr. Vince Howlett); Doris Petrie (Dr. Price); Michael Copeman (Jim Bronson); Alan Rosenthal (Anesthetist); Frank Perry (Flower Vendor); Vinetta Strombergs (Duty Nurse); Deborah Kimmett (Obs. Room Nurse); Lynn Vogt (Psychiatric Nurse); Hal Eisen (Code Blue Doctor); Wendy Lum (Station Nurse); Peggy Francis (Surgical Nurse); Candace Jennings (Hooker); Susan Spencer (Emergency Nurse).

A 19th-century scalpel is the cursed antique of the week, this one sold to Mr. James Morgan. Worse, this particular scalpel is rumored to have once belonged to none other than Jack the Ripper! Micki, Ryan, and Jack discover that Morgan has sold the scalpel to the renowned surgeon, Dr. Howlett, who is rumored to be able to save even the most hopeless patient's lives with his skill. The Curious Goods troika proceed to Ravenbrook Hospital to investigate Dr. Howlett and recover the scalpel.

**8. "Shadow Boxer"** Written by Joshua Daniel Miller; Directed by Timothy Bond; airdate: November 21, 1987; *Guest Cast:* David Ferry ("Terrible" Tommy Dunn); Jack Duffy (Manny King); Patricia Hamilton (Sadie King); Gerry Quigley (Doorman); Dennis Christensen (Pepper Bollski); Patsy Fern (Referee); Nicholas Pasco (Tony Terrific); Philip Akin (Kid Cornelius).

At Manny's Gym on 8th Street, an ex-con named "Terrible" Tommy Dunn steals cursed boxing gloves which create a murderous and pugilistic shadow. The gloves once belonged to welterweight champion "Killer" Ken Kelsey, a 1940s sports icon who left his boxing career after killing his last opponent. Micki, Ryan, and Jack visit with Sadie, Manny's wife, when the owner is beaten to death in an alley. They trace the gloves to Tommy, but not before he can kill "Tony Terrific" and threaten Manny's prize pupil, "Kid" Cornelius.

**9. "The Root of All Evil"** Written by Robert Hedden; Directed by Alan King; airdate: November 28, 1987; *Guest Cast*: Rico Colantoni (Adrian); Barclay Hope (Lloyd); Jack Mather (Smitty); Ian White (Charles); Kay Tremblay (Amanda); Tom Hauff (Harley O'Conner); Rita Tuckett (Mrs. O'Conner); George Buza (O'Conner's Neighbor); Domenic Cuzzocrea (Vagrant).

A garden mulcher from hell has a very unusual power: if you feed it a murdered person, not only will it grind up the corpse, it will spit out money of various denominations (depending on the wealth of the victim). Ryan and Jack search for Antique #27668 in Temple Heights at the same time that Micki starts to have difficulties with her husband-to-be, Lloyd. He wants her to leave the Curious Goods shop, marry him, and forget all about the cursed antiques. Meanwhile, Jack and Ryan follow ownership of the evil mulcher to Mrs. Harrington's wealthy estate, and finally to a down-on-his-luck gardener named Adrian. Adrian plots to feed the mulcher the rich old lady, while Micki plans to leave town with Lloyd.

**10. "Tales of the Undead"** Written by William Taub and Marc Scott Zicree; From a story by Alfred Sole and Paul Monette; Directed by Lyndon Chubbuck; airdate: January 30, 1988; *Guest Cast*: Ray Walston (Jay Star); David Hewlett (Cal Rawitz); Bob Aarons (Charlie Evans); Michelle George (Nancy Forbes); Jennifer Griffin (Linda); David Clement (Carmine); Anthony Bekenn (Mr. Briggs).

A determined comic book fan loves the character "Ferrus the Invincible" of the title *Tales of the Undead*, but the coveted and rare first issue is a collectors' item which costs \$25,000. The young man is desperate, and when he steals the precious comic he transforms into the comic book creation—a malevolent, indestructible robot. Ryan traces the comic book to Ferrus creator Jay Star, a bitter recluse who imagined the character in 1947, built the empire of Peerless Comics, and then was shoved aside by corporate politics. Star meets with the boy-turned-robot because he wants the cursed comic for himself so as to become Ferrus and inherit the character's invincibility to arthritis, heart conditions, and old age.

**11. "Scarecrow"** Written by Marc Scott Zicree; From a story by Larry B. Williams and Marc Scott Zicree; Directed by William Fruet; airdate: February 6, 1988; *Guest Cast*: Patricia Phillips (Marge Longacre); Ted Hanlan (Scarecrow); Steve Pernie (Sheriff Comins); Nicholas Van Bureck (Jordy Meeno); Andrew Martin Thompson (Dave Meeno); James B. Douglas (Charlie Cobean); Norma Edwards (Tudy Cobean); Todd Duckworth (Nick Cobean); Lee Rubie (Nate).

While Jack is away at the beach attempting to recover the Icarus Feather, Ryan and Micki take a road trip to farmer country in search of a cursed scarecrow which decapitates country folk with a scythe. The first family they encounter, the Cobeanes, claim that the scarecrow has been burned to ashes, but Micki and Ryan soon meet Marge Longacre—the woman who is manipulating the scarecrow and having it kill at her bidding. While the duo from Curious Goods stays at the charming Longacre Inn, the scarecrow continues to murder those who threaten Marge's livelihood. As Ryan and Micki learn more, Marge plans to kill them as well, and Micki finds a very unwelcome and murderous visitor in

her bed.

**12. “Faith Healer”** Written by Christine Cornish; Directed by David Cronenberg; airdate: February 13, 1988; *Guest Cast:* Miguel Fernandes (Jerry); Robert Silverman (Stuart Fischhoff); John Bethune (Man in Wheelchair); Lynne Gorman (Sylvia); David Robertson (Cop); Catherine Gallant (Woman with Dog); Eddie Roy (Joey Lessing); Robert King (Faith Healer).

A phony faith healer is pinpointed as a fraud during one of his shows, so he flees the church in terror. In a darkened alley, he discovers a white glove which possesses the miraculous power to heal the sick, but there is a high price to pay for the use of this cursed object: the glove retains the sickness until it is passed on and amplified in another human being. Jack, Ryan, and Micki learn that the cursed glove is from the time of DaVinci and that it was used to bring good health to Italy’s ruling family, and now they must attempt to retrieve it. When their efforts fail, Jack calls on an old friend, a debunker, to help ... but even Jack’s friend has an ulterior motive.

**13. “The Baron’s Bride”** Written by Larry Gaynor; Directed by Bradford May; airdate: February 20, 1988; *Guest Cast:* Tom McCamus (Frank Edwards); Kevin Bundy (Abraham); Susanna Hoffmann (Caitlin); Diana Barrington (Mrs. Forbes); John Shepherd (Constable); Emma Richler (Tart); Ron Tough (Man #1); Auntun Percic (Newspaper Vendor).

A young man visits a palatial home with a room for rent inside, but he gets more than he bargained for when he adorns a cursed black cape (with clasp) which turns him into a man of regal bearing ... irresistible to women. His odd day gets worse when the landlord of the house turns out to be a vampire! Ryan, Micki, and Jack manage to kill the undead creature but not before she has turned her would-be renter into a vampire as well. The magic properties of the cape transport Micki, Ryan, and the vampire back to Victorian London in the year 1875.

**14. “Bedazzled”** Written by Paul Monette and Alfred Sole; Directed by Alexander Singer; airdate: February 27, 1988; *Guest Cast:* Alan Jordan (Jonah); Gavin Magrath (Richie); David Mucci (Tom); Paula Barrett (Jenny); Timothy Webber (Telephone Lineman); Ratch Wallace (Officer Kennedy); J.J. Makaro (David Jones).

Jack and Ryan attempt to recover a cursed lantern aboard a sea vessel which has been prowling the ocean for sunken treasure. The unusual gold lantern can direct a beam of light at a person and set him aflame, so Jack and Ryan proceed with caution. After a scuffle, they get the antique back, but not before its would-be owner is able to read their car’s license plate number. He follows them to the shop during a storm and then strikes when Jack and Ryan are away at an astrologers’ convention and Micki is in the dark shop babysitting a friend’s child.

**15. “Vanity’s Mirror”** Written by Roy Sallows; From a story by Roy Sallows and Ira Levant; Directed by William Fruet; airdate: March 5, 1988; *Guest Cast:* Ingrid Veninger (Helen Mackie); David Orth (Scott Thomas); Gwendolyn Pacey (Joanne); Zak Ward (Greg Mazzey); Gayle Cherian (Sylvia Unger); James Loxley (Charles Meninger); Simon Reynolds (Russell Weigan).

A small, gold compact mirror with a ceramic snake across the lid has a devastating effect on men: when they gaze into it, they fall madly and irrevocably in love with the woman who holds it. When the bag lady who owns the compact dies in an accident, homely high school student Helen Mackie picks it up. She is soon using the cursed compact to beguile the boys in her class who have tormented her for

so long ... all of whom end up dead in a matter of hours since the compact demands blood. Ryan, Jack, and Micki go in search of the compact as Helen plots to steal her sister's handsome boyfriend Scott ... permanently.

**16. "Tattoo"** Written by Dan DiStefano and Stephen Katz; Directed by Lyndon Chubbock; airdate: March 12, 1988; *Guest Cast:* Keye Luke (Lum Chen); Leonard Chow (Tommy Chen); Meung Ling (Linda Chen); Dennis Akiyama (Hai Kuran); Harvey Chow (Frankie Wong); Von Flores (A.J.); Susan Jay (Opium Girl); Herbert Lee (Russian Roulette Manager); Bob Lem (Club Manager); Wendy Lum (Karen); Jim Yip (Chang).

Tommy Chen is having a bad losing streak at the gambling tables, and his grandfather disapproves of his addiction to winning as well as his possession of cursed tattoo needles which materializes into reality whatever monstrosity they carve into the flesh (including scorpions and spiders). Young Chen is using the needles to give himself a winning streak and pay back his enemies and debtors with death. Jack, Ryan, and Micki visit worried old Lum Chen and learn that his own grandson has beat him up so as to keep the evil tattooing instruments. When Tommy gets into a high-stakes game of Russian Roulette, the matter becomes of urgent importance to the trio from Curious Goods.

**17. "The Electrocutiener"** Written and directed by Rob Hedden; airdate: April 23, 1988; *Guest Cast:* Angelo Rizacos (Doctor Christian Lindheim/Eli Pittman); Frank Adamson (Warden Hobbs); Marcia Bennett (Peggy Hobbs); John Winston Carroll (Judge Miller); Jennifer Cornish (Melissa Duvall); Ron Hartman (Mr. Downing); Gerry Musgrove (Teenage Kid); Michael Tait (Daniel Kendricks).

In Evanclaw Federal Penitentiary in 1978, Eli Pittman is executed in the electric chair, even as he proclaims his innocence. Although pronounced dead after two jolts, the convict survives. Nine years later, Jack, Ryan, and Micki go in search of an electric chair that Vendredi once sold. The chair now resides at the soon-to-be closed Haverstock Reform School, where the convict is living a new life as a dentist. He has not forgotten the past, however, and is able to dispense murderous electric jolts from his own fingertips.

**18. "Brain Drain"** Written by Joshua Daniel Miller; Directed by Lyndon Chubbock; airdate: April 30, 1988; *Guest Cast:* Carrie Snodgrass (Viola Rhodes); Denis Forest (Harry Bradley/Dr. Stuart Pangborn); Brian Paul (Dr. Verner); Francois Klanfer (Dr. Robeson); David Walden (Dr. Maxwell); Andrew Massingham (Guard).

A prominent scientist at the Museum of Science and Natural History has discovered how to interface an organic brain with a computer, but more importantly he possesses a cursed antique trephinator which is said to have the power to transfer intelligence from one person to another by draining and replacing spinal fluids. One of the scientist's less-intelligent experimental subjects, a poor dope named Harry, drains the professor's mind so as to become smart. When the Curious Goods people investigate, Jack runs into Viola Rhodes, a woman he almost married twenty years earlier, and the love of his life. While Jack romances Viola, Micki, and Ryan must prevent Harry from draining the brains of science's greatest minds ... including the lovely Viola!

**19. "The Quilt of Hathor"** Written by Janet MacLean; Directed by Timothy Bond; airdate: May 7, 1988; *Guest Cast:* Scott Paulin (Reverend Josiah Grange); Kate Trotter (Effie Stokes); Diego Matmoros (Matthew); David Brown (Elder Fraser); Helen Carscallen (Sarah Good); Carolyn Dunn (Laura Grange); Araby Lockhart (Elder Florence); Diana Rowland (Rebecca Lamp); Patricia Streliaoff

(Jane Spring).

In Penitite country, a love-struck but spurned woman uses the cursed quilt of Hathor to foster murderous and arousing dreams. Ryan and Micki infiltrate the simple community, which disapproves of modern conveniences and ways, in an attempt to recover the artifact. Once there, Ryan falls in love with Laura, the soon-to-be-married daughter of widower Reverend Grange. When Ryan is caught in a barn after nightfall with Laura, he is forced to go before a Penitite tribunal.

**20. “The Quilt of Hathor Part II: The Awakening”** Written by Janet MacLean; Directed by Timothy Bond; airdate: May 14, 1988; *Guest Cast:* Scott Paulin (Reverend Josiah Grange); Kate Trotter (Effie Stokes); Bernard Behrens (Inquisitor Holmes); Diego Matmoros (Matthew); David Brown (Elder Fraser); Carolyn Dunn (Laura Grange); James Kirchner (Penitite Man #1); Araby Lockhart (Elder Florence); Judith Orban (Penitite Woman); Ric Sarabia (Penitite Man #2).

Ryan has remained behind in Penitite country to wed the Reverend’s daughter, and Micki has discovered that the quilt she recovered is a fake. When there is another murder, Ryan is accused of witchcraft and he reveals the secret of the Salem quilt to Reverend Grange. The Reverend then marries Effie Stokes, the owner of the quilt, and he kills her with its power. Now the quilt of Hathor has another corrupted owner, and Ryan must choose his destiny.

**21. “Double Exposure”** Written by Durnford King; Directed by Neill Fearnley; airdate: May 21, 1988; *Guest Cast:* Gary Frank (Winston Night); Catherine Disher (Cathy Schneider); Tony De Santis (Detective Duncan); Dennis O’Connor (Phil Benedetto); Fran Gebhard (Marlene); Deborah Tennant (Eleanor).

A newscaster possesses a cursed camera which can create real-life duplicates of whatever image it photographs. The ambitious anchorman has duplicated himself and sent his hellish clone to stir up some ratings by conducting a murder spree. After a date with a woman, Cathy, whom he met at the store, Ryan spies the killer in the act. The cops don’t believe Ryan’s story that the killer was Winston Night, TV newsman, and when Cathy is killed the Curious Goods team must make their case without the assistance of the authorities.

**22. “The Pirate’s Promise”** Written by Carl Binder; Directed by Bill Corcoran; airdate: July 2, 1988; *Guest Cast:* Cedric Smith (Joe Fenton); Thomas Hauff (Dewey Covington); Bernard Behrens (Barney); Kristen Keiferle (Mary); Susan Markle (Kim).

A collector of naval antiques and hunter of gold brings a woman back to his home in a remote lighthouse and sacrifices her to a ghoulish pirate in a black shroud. The pirate is connected to a cursed foghorn, and Ryan and Micki go up to Whaler’s Point to recover it. After stopping in at the local museum, they head up to the lighthouse and meet the foghorn’s current owner, Mr. Fenton, who claims to have sold the item. Ryan and Micki soon learn that he is deceiving them, and that the evil pirate is the ghost of Captain Angus McBride—a sailor who died three centuries ago when his crew mutinied.

**23. “Badge of Honor”** Written by Roy Sallows and Jim Henshaw; From a story by Roy Sallows; Directed by Michelle Manning; airdate: July 9, 1988; *Guest Cast:* Val Avery (Sharko); David Proval (Haas); John Stockwell (Tim); Lloyd Adams (Solly); Shane Cardwell (Lou); Frank Crudell (Printer); Michael D’Aguilar (Goon #1); Joan Goar (Castro); Jayne Heeley (Irene Sabara); Bill Lake (News



Commentator); Kenneth McGregor (Van Der Beck); Charlene Richards (Hooker); Ric Sarabia (Raoul).

A retired city cop named Sharko is using a cursed Sheriff's badge from the Old West (discovered in the evidence room) to kill the criminals he deems responsible for the death of his wife. At the same time, Micki is visited by an old flame named Tim who has apparently gotten himself involved in a life of crime. Ryan and Micki attempt to recover the badge while Sharko carries out his vendetta. Micki is surprised when Tim turns out to be something different than what she expected.

**24. "Pipe Dream"** Written by Marc Scott Zicree; Directed by Zale Dalen; airdate: July 16, 1988; *Guest Cast:* Michael Constantine (Ray Dallion); Frank Canino (Esposito); David Christoffel (Nathan Fielding); Marion Gilsenan (Connie); James Kidnie (John York); Nick Nichols (Buck Clemens); Darryl Shuttleworth (Keith Fielding); Christian Vidoso (General Abelar).

An idea consultant steals the plans for a prototype laser weapon from an unknown inventor at an investor's seminar by utilizing a cursed pipe which can eliminate a person with one burst of hellfire and smoke. At Curious Goods, Ryan is disturbed that his estranged father is remarrying again. These two threads come together when Ryan and Micki, visiting his dad for the ceremony, learn that he is the man using the evil pipe. Worse, Ryan discovers for the first time that his father was raised by Uncle Lewis Vendredi.

**25. "What a Mother Wouldn't Do"** Written by Bruce Martin; Directed by Neill Fearnley; airdate: July 23, 1988; *Guest Cast:* Lynne Cormack (Leslie Kent); Michael Countryman (Martin Kent); R.G. Armstrong (Uncle Lewis Vendredi); Robyn Stevan (Debbie Napier); Janet Bailey (Nurse Soames); Jack Jessop (Mr. Johnson); John Kozak (Dr. Green); Ruth Springford (Mrs. Everleigh); Cassandra and Rebecca Crangle (Baby Allison).

A despondent woman who learns that her baby will have to be aborted has a change of fate when she happens upon Lewis Vendredi's shop and an antique, but cursed, Edwardian cradle. Although her baby is born healthy, in return the cradle demands blood ... the blood of seven people. As it turns out, the cradle belonged to a passenger on the *Titanic* and her baby, and now those who die for the cradle must do so in water. Jack, Ryan, and Micki attempt to buy back the cradle, but recovering this antique could cost an innocent baby her life.

**26. "Bottle of Dreams"** Written by Roy Sallows; Directed by Mac Bradden; airdate: July 30, 1988; *Guest Cast:* Elias Zarou (Rashid); R.G. Armstrong (Uncle Lewis Vendredi); Lazar Rockwood (The Messenger); Keram Malicki-Sanchez (Peter).

While Jack, Ryan, and Micki are celebrating their good fortune in recovering cursed antiques, a mysterious man returns a cursed Egyptian urn (which preserves the organs of mummies) to the store. Once in the vault, the urn emits a green gas which causes Ryan and Micki to recollect their previous horrific adventures. Jack summons a friend named Rashid to help, but it may be too late to save his friends, even on the mystical "dream" plane. Those who inhale the fumes of the jar are condemned to have waking nightmares until their hearts burst with terror.

*Note:* This episode features clips from "The Inheritance," "Cupid's Quiver," "Scarecrow," "Tattoo," "Doctor Jack," "Tales of the Undead," and "The Baron's Bride."

**27. “Doorway to Hell”** Written by Jim Henshaw; Directed by William Fruet; airdate: September 30, 1988; *Guest Cast:* Elias Zarou (Rashid); R.G. Armstrong (Uncle Lewis Vendredi); Charles Landry (Buddy); Justin Louis (Eddie); Warren Van Evera (Mike).

Uncle Lewis makes another attempt to return to the world of the living. This time, he has trapped Micki and Ryan in his abandoned house with two murderous burglars, and left Jack to seek help once more from his friend, Rashid. One of the burglars is possessed by Vendredi’s spirit, and Lewis proceeds to open the doorway to hell. Jack must proceed to the nether region and close the gates, lest Ryan and Micki be destroyed.

**28. “The Voodoo Mambo”** Written by Agy Polly; Directed by Timothy Bond; airdate: October 7, 1988; *Guest Cast:* Joe Seneca (Hedley, the Guardian of Fire); David Matheson (Carl Walters); Suzanne Coy (Laetia); Dolores Etienne (Abul Legba); Abbott Anderson (Cayon Legba); Rachel Crawford (Stacy); Sandi Ross (Dyson Legba); Lori Hallier (Jennifer); Warren Davis (David Rhodes).

A man who might be the link between life and the afterlife comes to visit Jack just as a voodoo party is held in town. It is the solstice and Hedley, Jack’s friend, is preparing to watch his stepdaughter Stacy become a high priestess called a mambo. At the same time, a young man named Carl learns that he has lost his father’s estate because of mismanagement. Before he is evicted, Carl finds a cursed Haitian mask which commits horrible murder and promises to show him the way to his true inheritance.

**29. “And Now the News”** Written by Dick Benner; Directed by Bruce Pittman; airdate: October 14, 1988; *Guest Cast:* Kate Trotter (Dr. Carter); Kurt Reis (Dr. Kevin Finch); Fran Gebilard (Bradley); Ian Wallace (Nurse Swanson); Alex Karzis (Craig); Henry Ramer (Radio Announcer); Stephen Brack (John Gibson); Wendy Lyons (Mary Fraser); George Buza (Hulk Maniac).

A cursed radio can cause horrible hallucinations, and Dr. Carter at the Maseo Institute for the Criminally Insane is using it for her own professional gain. With Jack out of town, Micki and Ryan follow a lead to the hospital and Ward A in an attempt to recover it. Ryan makes an abortive effort to break into the hospital but traps himself on an electric fence and is injured. Micki then infiltrates the hospital, pretending to be a reporter, even as the villainous Dr. Carter plans three additional deaths.

**30. “Tails I Live, Heads You Die”** Written by Marilyn Anderson and Billy Riback; Directed by Mark Sobel; airdate: October 21, 1988; *Guest Cast:* Colin Fox, Bill MacDonald (Hewitt); Allen Stewart-Coates (Carl Naft); Jonathan Hartman (Tiriell); Chris Bondy (Cop); Les Rubie (Caretaker); J.J. Makaro (Gravedigger #1); John Walsh (Gravedigger #2).

Satanists are robbing graves and using a cursed coin in a ritual to revive a nefarious dead comrade, Carl Naft. A reporter warns Jack about the evil goings-on, and soon the Curious Goods troika is involved in further danger. The devil worshipers are planning to revive two additional dead comrades with the coin so that Lucifer may be summoned to the Earth. While observing the ceremonies of the Coven, Micki is zapped by the coin and presumed dead.

**31. “Symphony in B#”** Written by Carl Binder; Story by Peter Mohan; Directed by Francis Delia; airdate: November 4, 1988; *Guest Cast:* James Russo (Janos Korda); Ely Pouget (Leslie); Christopher

Britton (Phil); Richard Sali (Martin); Marin Donlevy (Janitor); Charles Hayter (Bum).

A night at the symphony strikes a sour note for Ryan and Micki when a janitor is murdered by a *Phantom of the Opera*-style figure. This masked avenger is haunting the Adelaide Theater and threatening the life of a beautiful violinist whom Ryan has fallen for. As Ryan, Jack, and Micki learn more, they realize that the great violinist Janos Korda, believed dead in a car accident years ago, may be the culprit. As Ryan grows closer to Leslie, Micki suspects a cursed violin may also be involved.

**32. “Master of Disguise”** Written by Bruce Martin; Directed by Tom McLoughlin; airdate: November 11, 1988; *Guest Cast*: John Bolger (William Pratt); Grant Alianak (Sandy); Chapelle Jaffe (Tanya); Jason Blicher (Todd); Joyce Gordon (Joanne); Lindsay Richardson (Teri); Susan Kyle (Louise); Aaron Schwartz (Geary); George Sperdakos (Sig); Mark Saunders (Young Man); Candace Jennings (Nightgown Lady).

A movie crew comes to town, and Micki is excited about meeting screen heartthrob William Pratt. Little does she or anyone else realize that the famous thespian is making use of a cursed antique: an old makeup box which requires blood sacrifices to keep its owner beautiful. As Micki falls for Pratt, Ryan researches Pratt’s history and discovers that people have died on all his movie sets. Worse, Ryan and Jack find that the make-up kit once belonged to John Wilkes Booth—the man who killed Lincoln!

**33. “Wax Magic”** Written by Carl Binder; Directed by William Fruet; airdate: November 18, 1988; *Guest Cast*: Susannah Hoffman (Marie); Angelo Rizacos (Aldwen Chase); Yvan Labelle (Danny); Trevor Bain (Cop); David Blacker (Boy #1); Vincent Murray (Boy #2); Kirk Austensen (Teen Boy); Danielle Kiraly (Teen Girl).

A carnival is in town boasting a world famous wax museum which features sculptures of Jack the Ripper, Al Capone, Jesse James, Bluebeard, and other nefarious characters. Ryan and Jack visit the carnival together since Micki is out of town, and run across a strange mystery: people are being butchered by a wax figure. Ryan soon falls in love with a carnie named Marie who suffers from fainting spells. Strangely, Marie and the murders are connected by a strange curse involving Lizzie Borden and the handkerchief of Louis XIV.

**34. “Read My Lips”** Written by Angelo Stea and Peter Lauterman; Directed by Francis DeLia; airdate: November 25, 1988; *Guest Cast*: Billy Drago (Edgar Van Horne); John Byner (Travis Plunkett); Linda Griffiths (Gabrielle).

A famous ventriloquist, Edgar Van Horne, is terrorized by his dummy, Oscar. Micki’s old roommate is engaged to marry Van Horne, so Ryan and Micki are soon involved. A second ventriloquist with aspirations of greatness waits in the wings to control Oscar, even as the dummy becomes increasingly more “alive.” Events come to a head when Oscar interrupts Gabrielle and Edgar’s wedding, and starts to heckle the bride during the ceremony.

**35. “13 O’Clock”** Written and directed by Rob Hedden; airdate: January 7, 1989; *Guest Cast*: Gwynyth Walsh (Raentha Wilkerson); David Proval (Eric); Ingrid Veninger (Skye); Jason Hopley (Johnny-O); Ron Hartmann (Henry Wilkerson); Alan Moses (Banker); Peter Langley (Businessman Bob Barnett).

After a man commits murder near a subway station, time stops as his pocket watch strikes 13 o’clock.

His wife has seen her husband in action and plots with her crooked boyfriend Eric to steal the watch. She murders her husband, steals the object, and realizes it freezes time for an hour—just enough time for her to steal a fortune in jewelry. The Curious Goods team investigates and realizes that the cursed watch controls an occult block of time, even as they struggle to save two homeless kids from being the watch's next victims.

**36. “Night Hunger”** Written by Jim Henshaw; Directed by Martin Lavut; airdate: January 14, 1989; *Guest Cast:* Richard Panebianco (Mikey Fierna); Real Andrews (Deacon); Elliott Smith (Dead Boy); Nick Nichols (Dominic Fierna); Jillian Cook (Nurse); Gaston Poux.

Ever since he was a little boy in the local little league, Mikey has wanted to beat Deacon at something... anything. Now, with the help of a cursed object, he may finally have the chance to make his unsupportive father proud. Ryan, Micki, and Jack remember that Mikey used to be a regular visitor to Vendredi's shop, and they ask him if he ever bought an antique there. He claims not to have done so, but in fact, he is in possession of a cursed silver chain and key which thrives on human blood, and serves to fuel his sense of revenge.

**37. “The Sweetest Sting”** Written by Rick Butler and Roy Sallows; Directed by David Winning; airdate: January 21, 1989; *Guest Cast:* Art Hindle (McCabe); Tim Webber (Bob Tucker); Victor Sutton (Ben Landis); Gerry Pearson (Purdy); J. Winston Carroll (Norman); David Palfy (Fred); Isla Von Glatz (Diana).

Micki, Jack, and Ryan attempt to recover an antique beehive. The bees from this hive are most unusual: they are vampiric, and they allow the owner of the cursed collectible to live forever.

**38. “The Playhouse”** Written and directed by Tom McLoughlin; airdate: January 28, 1989; *Guest Cast:* Robert Oliveri (Mike Carlson); Lisa Jakub (Janine Carlson); Belinda Metz (Sylvia); Wayne Best (Brad); Denise McCleod (Crystal); Illya Wolosiiyn (Danny Green); Gayle Kerbel (Mrs. Green); Richard Sal (Lieutenant); Alex Carter (Policeman); Brian Furlong, Christina Trivett.

Two abused children, Mike and Janine, invite a friend into their haunted backyard playhouse, an evil, dark place which resembles the home from the film *Psycho*. There have been nine missing children in local Perkinsville, and Ryan has been tracking down the playhouse from Vendredi's inventory. As more and more children disappear into the gothic playhouse, finding it becomes imperative.

**39. “Eye of Death”** Written by Peter Jobin, Timothy Bond, and Roy Sallows; Directed by Timothy Bond; airdate: February 4, 1989; *Guest Cast:* Tom McCamus (Atticus Rook); Brooke Johnson (Abigail); Jack Creley (Easton); Patrusia Sarakula (Lydia); David Bolt (Colonel); Danny Pawlick (Wounded Soldier); Bernard Behrens (General Robert E. Lee).

During the Civil War, a black-garbed stranger urges General Robert E. Lee to hold his ground at Sharpsburg, even though the Union enemy has Confederate forces surrounded. The stranger, a man who claims to be a doctor named Rook, is systematically raiding the past for antiques and returning to 1989 to sell the “mint” Civil War antiques at high prices. Jack, Ryan, and Micki go to an auction Rook is holding in an attempt to reacquire a haunted lantern which Vendredi referred to as the “eye of death.” Trying to catch Mr. Rook in the act, Ryan is propelled backwards in time to September 17, 1862, the day after 22,000 men died at Antietam, and sentenced to death as a Yankee spy.

**40. “Face of Evil”** Written by Jim Henshaw; Directed by William Fruet; airdate: February 11, 1989; *Guest Cast:* Gwendolyn Pacie (Helen); Laura Robinson (Tabitha); Monika Schnarre (Sandy); Barry Greene (Donohue).

Almost a year ago, Jack, Ryan, and Micki attempted to track down a cursed compact which made ugly women seem beautiful, but which required the lives of the lovelorn in exchange for such total enthrallment. A high school student possessed the compact when she died, but the item itself was never found. Now, the compact is in the hands of the dead girl’s sister, a keepsake, but an aging model who longs to be forever beautiful soon takes advantage of its evil powers.

*Note:* This episode is a sequel to the first season entry “Vanity’s Mirror.”

**41. “Better Off Dead”** Written by Bruce Martin; Directed by Armand Mastroianni; airdate: February 18, 1989; *Guest Cast:* Neil Munroe (Warren); Camilla Scott (Linda); Tara Meyer (Amanda); Lubomir Mykytiuk (Dr. Chadway); Bonnie Beck (Leslie); James Oregan (Detective); Barbara Franklin (Nurse).

A scientist brings a prostitute home to his laboratory and extracts blood from her neck. He hopes this transfusion will save his sick daughter, Amanda, who is given to bouts of extreme violence. Jack and Ryan learn of a rash of missing prostitutes and suspect that a cursed antique may be involved, and Micki grows frantic when her college roommate, Linda, is captured by the crazed scientist. Jack and Ryan believe that by recovering a cursed silver syringe, they will also find the missing Linda ... but things turn ugly when Micki is captured and subjected to the same gruesome experiment which has taken Linda’s life.

**42. “Scarlet Cinema”** Written by Rob Hedden; Directed by David Winning; airdate: February 25, 1989; *Guest Cast:* Jonathan Wise (Darius); John Graham (Blair); Peter Massaline (Professor Schwartz); Julie A. Stewart (Carissa); John Swindells (Taylor).

A cursed movie camera is stolen by a young loser with a fascination for the black and white film *The Wolfman*. If the outcast film student can take three lives (with the help of the camera), the cursed camera will allow him his fondest wish—he will become the wolfman himself, a powerful figure from the movies. Jack, Ryan, and Micki must now stop the killings and recover the camera before the transformation can begin.

**43. “The Mephisto Ring”** Written by Marilyn Anderson and Billy Riback; From a story by Peter Largo; Directed by Bruce Pittman; airdate: April 15, 1989; *Guest Cast:* Denis Forest (Donald); Doris Petrie (Mrs. Wren); Jack Duffy (William Wren); Michael Woods (Angela); Alar Aedna (Lewis Hunt); James Purcell.

A gambler loses a big bet and is hassled by the mob. A cursed ring once owned by the gambler’s father kills the mob enforcer and the young man sees an opportunity. The ring gives and takes: it predicts winners in sporting events like horse races, but requires murders to be committed in return. Ryan and Micki look for the ring, which is the first antique that Lewis Vendredi ever sold.

**44. “A Friend to the End”** Written by Scott J. Schneid and Tony Michelman; From a story by David Morse, Scott J. Schneid and Tony Michelman; Directed by David Morse; airdate: April 22, 1989; *Guest Cast:* Zachary Bennett (J.B.); Keram Malicki-Sanchez (Ricki).

Micki's effort to hunt down a cursed antique is impeded by the presence of her nephew, J.B., whom she is supposed to be babysitting. When J.B. is left to play in the park alone for a time, he happens upon his own adventure with horror when he encounters a haunted house and further evidence of Vendredi's evil.

**45. "The Butcher"** Written by Francis Delia and Ron Magid; Directed by Francis Delia; airdate: April 29, 1989; *Guest Cast:* Nigel Bennett (Rausch "The Butcher"/Carl Steiner); Julius Harris (Simpson); John Gilbert (Shaw); Colin Fox (Mueller); Robert McKenna (Vall); Les Rubie (Lefty); Sherry Miller (Interviewer).

A Nazi evil awakens when the frozen body of Hitler's successor as Fuhrer is reanimated with the powers of an amulet belonging to the servants of Thule. Now the ascension of the Fourth Reich, which is prophesied to last a thousand years, must be stopped. When Jack is haunted by dreams of the Nazi evil, he knows the fight must be rejoined despite his terrifying experiences in World War II. As his war buddies are murdered, Jack and two old friends team up to fight the Nazis one last time.

**46. "Mesmer's Bauble"** Written by Joe Gannon; Directed by Armand Mastroianni; airdate: May 6, 1989; *Guest Cast:* Vanity (Angelica); Martin Neufield (Howard Moore); Laurie Paton (Anita); Eve Crawford (Mrs. Burns); Jennifer Cornish (Girl #1); Sandra Brown (Girl #2); Tim Gammon (Jogger); Tony DeSantis (Roger).

A young man obsessed with the beautiful pop star, Angelica, is also hideously ugly because of acne. When he comes upon a cursed pendant which makes his wishes come true, he realizes he may finally have a way to get close to his fantasy woman, Angelica, and be beautiful at the same time. Using Mesmer's Bauble, Howard infiltrates Angelica's inner circle, killing as he goes. Before long, Howard is Angelica's manager and even her lover, but even that accomplishment is not enough to fulfill his deepest, kinkiest fantasy.

**47. "Wedding in Black"** Written by Angelo Stea and Peter Lauterman; Directed by Rodney Charters; airdate: May 13, 1989; *Guest Cast:* Stephen Meadows (Calvin); Carolyn Dunn (Maya); Guy Bannerman (Brother Antonio); Terrence Slatter (Warden); Michelyn Emelle (Black Woman); Jillian Hennessey (Spanish Hooker).

Three fallen souls from around the world (Buenos Aires, Nigeria, and Miami, specifically) are recruited by a vengeful devil to end the interference of Micki, Ryan, and Marshak, who have collected many cursed objects and prevented the devil from winning the souls of more men. The souls, all people from Jack's, Micki's and Ryan's past, arrive at Curious Goods and trap the troika of protagonists inside a cursed crystal ball with snow and a magic castle inside. Ryan catches onto the game and refuses to be tricked, while Micki and Jack are each incarcerated inside the magic ball, living an illusion. If Ryan cannot save his friends, Jack could lose his soul and Micki might find herself the devil's bride and the antichrist's mother!

**48. "Wedding Bell Blues"** Written by Nancy Ann Miller; Directed by Jorge Montesi; airdate: May 20, 1989; *Guest Cast:* Elizabeth MacLellan (Jen); Steven Monarque (Johnny Ventura); Justin Louis (Danny); Gary Farmer (Rick); Maurice Dean Wint (Gil); Lolita David, Marium Carvell.

While Jack and Ryan go off in search of cursed snowshoes, Micki and Ryan's friend, Johnny Ventura, pursue a cursed pool cue stick. The trail leads to a kid named Danny who is stringing his girlfriend

along, and competing to win a pool tournament. Micki and Johnny grow attracted to one another as they attempt to recover the stick. To Micki's surprise, the cursed cue is being manipulated not by Danny, but by his lovestruck girlfriend who is desperate to get married.

**49. "The Maestro"** Written by Karen Janigan; Directed by Timothy Bond; airdate: May 27, 1989; *Guest Cast:* Colme Feore (Anton Pascola); Cyndy Preston (Gracie Callwell); Karen Woolridge (Cartier); Patric Creelman (Manning); Sonya Delwaige (Anne Marcoth); Abbott Anderson (Gus); Carole Galloway (Mrs. Lee).

A harsh dancing coach who lives by the axiom "life is short—art lasts forever" uses a cursed antique to help give him choreography inspiration on his new ballet, "The Legend of Sheba." In the process, two innocent dancers (playing Romeo and Juliet) die in what appears to be a suicide. Jack's new ward Gracie, the daughter of a friend, is invited to join Anton's dance troupe, but she soon learns of his callous and demanding nature. Jack discovers, too late, that the maestro is using a cursed Early Victorian Symphonia to make Gracie's first performance her last one.

**50. "The Shaman's Apprentice"** Written by Michael Michaelian; Directed by William Fruet; airdate: June 3, 1989; *Guest Cast:* Paul Miceli-Sanchez (Dr. Whitecloud); Gordon Tottoosis (Spotted Owl); Isabelle Mejias (Blair); James B. Douglas (Dr. Lamar); Heather Hess (Sasheena).

A native American ceremonial rattle may hold the key to saving the lives of terminally ill patients, and Dr. Whitecloud decides to take advantage of this special power. The only problem is that the rattle is cursed, and that for every life it saves, it requires a death in return. While visiting a friend in the hospital, Micki encounters a drama of revenge as Dr. Whitecloud eliminates his enemies to heal the sick.

**51. "The Prisoner"** Written by Jim Henshaw; Directed by Armand Mastroianni; airdate: June 10, 1989; *Guest Cast:* Larry Joshua (Dayton Railsback); Sean McCann, Steve Monarque (Johnny); Les Carlson (Arkwrith); Dwight Bacquie (Chicano); Johnnie Chase (Guard #1); Kevin Rushton (Guard #2); Belinda Metz, Victor Ermanis, Malcom Stewart, Alexis Karsis, Frank Adamson.

A robbery in 1979 goes bad suddenly and one perpetrator is incarcerated for a decade while his two partners escape with the loot. Ten years later, the jailed thief plans to escape by utilizing a cursed Japanese kamikaze jacket which makes him invisible. Ryan, Micki, and Jack reteam with Johnny Ventura to recover the unusual leather bomber jacket after Johnny's dad, a warehouse security man, is killed by the invisible crook. Johnny is framed for his Dad's murder, as the invisible man escapes, and Johnny is sent to jail.

**52. "Coven of Darkness"** Written by Wendy Rodriguez; Directed by George Bloomfield; airdate: June 17, 1989; *Guest Cast:* Maria Ricossa (Lysa); Maurice E. Evans (Gareth); Mark Wilson (Shannon).

Ryan becomes a helpless pawn in the battle over possession of another antique: a witch's ladder. Possessed by the forces of a demonic cult, Ryan attempts to steal the ladder from the vault himself, and it is up to Micki and Jack to save Ryan and be certain that the cult, which worships Vendredi, does not win the ladder back.

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**53. “The Prophecies” (two-hour episode)** Written and Directed by Tom McLoughlin; airdate: October 7, 1989; *Guest Cast:* Fritz Weaver (Astaroth); Marie France Lambert (Sister Adele); Jill Frappier (Mrs. Dallion); Tara Meyers (Christina).

A research trip to Europe proves devastating and life-altering for the Curious Goods trio when Jack falls into a coma and Ryan is possessed by the devil. Working with Johnny Ventura, Micki must save her two friends from the vile Astaroth, a demon hoping to fulfill a prophecy that will allow Lucifer to gain dominion over all life on Earth. Little does Micki realize that she, Ryan, and Jack will pay a high price to stop evil this time: one of them will not survive the battle intact.

**54. “Demon Hunter”** Written by Jim Henshaw; Directed by Armand Mastroianni; airdate: October 14, 1989; *Guest Cast:* Dale Wilson (Cassidy); Allison Mang (Bonnie Cassidy); David Orth (Vance Cassidy); David Stratton (Travis Cassidy); Jacques Fortier (Ahriman).

With Ryan gone, Micki invites Jack to become her full partner at Curious Goods. While discussing the situation, Jack and Micki receive a demon worship knife in the mail. After Jack accidentally cuts his hand on the ceremonial dagger, Johnny, Micki, and Jack team up with a family of demon hunters to kill a monstrous creature who has a strange connection with the knife. Beneath the Vendredi vault, the Curious Goods trio discover a demonic altar and the skeletons of those sacrificed to Satan.

**55. “Crippled Inside”** Written by Brian Helgeland; Directed by Timothy Bond; airdate: October 21, 1989; *Guest Cast:* Stephanie Morgenstern (Rachel); Greg Spottiswood (Marcus); Diana LeBlanc (Judith Horn); Dean McDermott (Peter); Andrew Simms (Ed); John Gilbert (Old Man); Joyce Gordon.

A young girl named Rachel is struck by a car while attempting to escape from a gang rape. Paralyzed for life because of the accident, Rachel purchases a cursed wheelchair at a yard sale. Micki flies to London to help Jack recover a cursed antique, leaving Johnny on his own to recover the wheelchair. The unusual chair allows the person who sits in it to astral project and move freely despite paralysis, but it demands the blood of the guilty in return.

**56. “Stick It in Your Ear”** Written by Jon Ezrine; Directed by Douglas Jackson; airdate: October 28, 1989; *Guest Cast:* Wayne Best (Adam Cole).

A charlatan psychic who has become hard-of-hearing comes into possession of a cursed hearing aid which allows him to hear and assimilate the thoughts of those around him. Unfortunately, use of the hearing aid is prohibitive: unless the psychic releases the captured thoughts to other people, his head will explode from the accumulating pressure!

**57. “Bad Penny”** Written by Marilyn Anderson and Billy Riback; Directed by William Fruet; airdate: November 11, 1989; *Guest Cast:* Sean McCann (Vince); John Bourgois (Briggs); Ed Setrakian (Groma).

The cursed coin which once (briefly) killed Micki but was never recovered, returns to cause more trouble. This time, it is in the hands of a corrupt police officer. Johnny, who is mourning the death of his father, considers using the evil coin to bring him back from the grave, but a life must be taken if a life is to be saved.

*Note:* This story is a sequel to “Tails I Live, Heads You Die.”



**58. "Hate on Your Dial"** Written by Nancy Ann Miller; Directed by Allan Eastman; airdate: November 18, 1989; *Guest Cast:* Michael Rhoades (Ray); Robert Silverman (Archie); Martin Doyle (Steve); Melanie Miller (Margaret); Richard Mills (Elliott); Marc Gomez (Henry).

Johnny unwittingly sells a cursed car radio from a 1950s Chevy to a young man with a history of racism in his family. After some blood soils the radio knobs, the cursed tune box transports the boy to a past involving the Ku Klux Klan, lynchings, and a legacy of hatred.

**59. "Night Prey"** Written by Peter Mohan; Directed by Armand Mastroianni; airdate: November 25, 1989; *Guest Cast:* Michael Burgess (Kurt); Genevieve Langlois (Michelle); Eric Murphy (Evan); Vincent Dale (Baker); Dan McDonald (Father McKinnon); Don Carrier.

A vengeful vampire killer who once lost his beloved wife to a bloodsucker, comes into the possession of a cursed crucifix with the power to destroy all creatures of the night. The only problem is that the vampire hunter kills a priest, a friend of Jack's, to get it. Now Jack must stop the vampire hunter from using Vendredi's evil to destroy another evil.

**60. "Femme Fatale"** Written by Jeffrey Bernini; Directed by Francis Delia; airdate: December 2, 1989; *Guest Cast:* Gordon Pinsent (Desmond Williams); Kate Reid (Lita); Chris Moore.

A film director still lusts after the beautiful young female star of his most famous gangster film, his now invalid wife. By feeding his movies the lives of innocent young women, the director is able to experience passion and one-night stands with the character he so loves ... who comes off the screen to be with him. The scenario turns even uglier, however, when the beautiful movie character demands the death of the director's helpless wife so that she can escape from the old film permanently.

**61. "Mightier Than the Sword"** Written by Brian Helgeland; Directed by Armand Mastroianni; airdate: January 20, 1990; *Guest Cast:* Colm Feore (Dent); Donna Goodhand (Marion); Markus Parilo (Clint Fletcher); James Kee (Jerry Fletcher); Thomas Hauff (Prison Chaplain).

A writer makes use of a cursed fountain pen to "inject" his writing with just the right amount of violence to make it a bestseller. Unfortunately, the crimes that the writer includes in his work are soon mimicked in reality.

**62. "Year of the Monkey"** Written by R. Scott Gemmill; Directed by Rodney Charters; airdate: January 27, 1990; *Guest Cast:* Robert Ito (Tanaka) John Fujikowa (Muasashi); Leonard Chow (Koji); Von Flores (Hito); Tia Carrere (Michiko).

Jack, Micki, and Johnny reluctantly become involved in an old Japanese feud as they make a strange bargain: they will recover three monkey statues from the family of one Japanese man in exchange for possession of a cursed antique from another man. But the monkey statues are in the hands of three children, and they themselves are cursed.

**63. "Epitaph for a Lonely Soul"** Written by Carl Binder; Directed by Allan Kroeker; airdate: February 3, 1990; *Guest Cast:* Neil Munro (Eli Leonard); Monki Schnarre (Lisa Caldwell); Barclay Hope (Steve Wells); Clair Cellucci (Linda); Antony Desmond (Teenager).

An aspirator is the cursed device of the week. This unusual device, used by morticians to drain bodily

fluids from corpses, can actually breathe life into the already dead. As usual, there is a price to pay for any such resurrection: for a life to be given, a life must be taken in return. A shy mortician brings a beautiful woman back from the dead and tries to romance her, while Jack and Micki look into the matter.

**64. “Midnight Riders”** Written by Jim Henshaw; Directed by Allan Eastman; airdate: February 10, 1990; *Guest Cast:* Dennis Thatcher, Lawrence King, George Buza, Andrea Roth (Penny Galen); David Orth (Tommy Betz); John Friesen (Sheriff Craydon); John Baylor (Reverend Betz); James Jones (The Dragon).

A peaceful night of stargazing near the town of Delight turns to surprise and terror for Jack, Johnny, and Micki when they face down a gang of spectral bikers who have already attacked two unsuspecting teenagers. Stranger than that, Jack’s father shows up suddenly, though he has been presumed dead for seventeen years. Jack’s father, the gang, and the town itself are all involved in the strange local legend of “The Dragon,” a headless biker who steals the craniums of the living at the nearby lover’s lane. Now an old crime buried in the passage of time is spurring new destruction, and Jack’s father has a second chance to save his soul.

**65. “Repetition”** Written by Jennifer Lynch; Directed by William Fruet; airdate: February 17, 1990; *Guest Cast:* Kate Trotter (Anne Holloway); David Ferry (Walter); Vicki Wauchope (Heather Stevens); Kay Tremblay (Mrs. Cromwall); Sharry Flett (Ruth Stevens); Stephen Hunter (Martin Lenz).

A sleepy newspaper journalist who has been up all night writing his column loses control of his car and accidentally strikes a little girl, Heather, killing her. The guilt-stricken man does not report the incident, and a month later Heather is still presumed missing because the murderer hid her body to avoid culpability. A cursed cameo locket becomes imbued with the dead girl’s spirit and begs to be brought back to life ... an act which will require Walter to kill another person so as to trade souls and return Heather to the land of the living. The trade goes smoothly when Walter offers up his sick mother’s life in exchange, but then the locket starts to cry out in her voice.

**66. “The Long Road Home”** Written by Carl Binder; Directed by Allan Kroeker; airdate: February 24, 1990; *Guest Cast:* Angelo Rizacos (Eddie Negaly); Geza Kovacs (Mike Negaly); Michael Philip (Jerry); Eric Coates (Don); Barbara Von Radecki (Carol); Jack Zimmerman (Attendant); Beverly Murray (Waitress).

After recovering a Yin/Yang charm which allows people to exchange bodies, Micki and Johnny face a five-hour trip home to Curious Goods, with a storm impending. Their journey hits a snag at the roadside Henshaw’s Diner when two redneck brothers accost them, and sabotage their car. When the car breaks down far from the interstate, Johnny and Micki end up at the dark, isolated Negaly place ... owned by the redneck brothers! A night of terror ensues as Micki is forced to cavort with the Neagly’s dead relatives (nicely stuffed thanks to Eddie’s interest in taxidermy), and Johnny is forced to use the cursed Yin/Yang charm and switch bodies so as to save his own life.

**67. “My Wife as a Dog”** Written by Jim Henshaw; Directed by Armand Mastroianni; airdate: March 3, 1990; *Guest Cast:* Denis Forest (Aubrey Ross); Kim Nelles (Lea Ross); Jayne Eastwood (Joni).

A fireman undergoing a bitter divorce and worrying about his sick dog recovers a cursed dog collar in a fire which, in exchange for a life, can bring life back to another. The fireman uses the collar to pull a

bizarre switcheroo: his ungrateful wife shifts into his dog's body, and his loyal dog shifts into his wife's body.

**68. "Jack-in-the-Box"** Written by Dennis Foon; Directed by David Winning; airdate: May 5, 1990; *Guest Cast:* Wayne Best (Brock); Marsha Moreau (Megan), Lori Hallier (Helen); Alan C. Peterson (Mike).

A little girl watches helplessly as her father is brutally murdered. When the girl receives an antique (and, inevitably, cursed) jack-in-the-box as a birthday gift, she has an outlet for her pain and suffering. She sics the devilish device on her father's murderers, starting a murder spree which draws the attention of Curious Goods.

**69. "Spirit of Television"** Written by Robert Holbrook; Directed by Jorge Montesi; airdate: May 12, 1990; *Guest Cast:* Marj Dusay (Ilsa Van Zandt); Paul Humphrey (William); Belinda Metz (Jessica Frances); Paul Bettis (Robert Jandini); Nancy Cser (Genevieve); Hamish McEwan (Vinnie); Ilia Carnivalli (Maria Jandini); Susan Cox.

A medium, Ilsa Van Zandt, gives life to the spirit inside a cursed TV set so that her own fading life will be extended. When rock diva Jessica Frances is Ilsa's next victim, Micki decides it time to investigate the medium. Soon a prominent fashion designer is also dead, and Jack arranges for a debunker, Jandini, to determine how the medium's power is working. Ilsa sets out to steal the debunker's life, with little time left to save her own existence from a degenerative disease.

**70. "The Tree of Life"** Written by Christine Foster; Directed by William Fruet; airdate: May 19, 1990; *Guest Cast:* Gale Garnett (Dr. Sybil Oakwood); Brenda Bazinet (Mrs. Eng); John Innes (Matthew Sanderson); Tedde Moore (Nurse Dana); Barbara Gordon (Nurse Morgan); Robert Bidaman (Michael Eng); Ashley Wood (Stephanie); Carole Galloway (Mrs. Sanderson); Graham McPherson (Dr. Cornwell); Martin Donlevy (Newsie).

The Oakwood Clinic's secret to making infertile couples pregnant involves a dark secret at the foot of a mighty oak tree. Dr. Oakwood is secretly repopulating a Druid cult, exploiting pregnant women and stealing their girl children. When a woman tells Johnny that her little girl has been taken, he agrees to help her by learning the truth. Behind the cult is a cursed object, the statue of a Celtic god called Cernunnos.

**71. "The Charnel Pit"** Written by Jim Henshaw; Directed by Armand Mastroianni; airdate: May 26, 1990; *Guest Cast:* Neil Munro, Vlasta Vrana, Cyndy Preston (Stephanie); Paul Jolicoeur (Latour); Genevieve Langlois (Catherine); Andrew Jackson (General Lafayette); Christa Daniel (Larissa); Gerard Parkes (Fontaine); Robert Nicholson (Innkeeper); Louise Kidney (Peasant); Nancy Gerr (Countess).

A cursed two-faced painting representing life and death is actually a portal to the world of the Marquis de Sade ... a world where women are held captive and tortured. A crazy college professor is shipping beautiful coeds through the painting in exchange for pages from the Marquis's lost manuscript. When Micki attempts to save the latest victim, she is cast into the painting and transported backwards through time. Trapped in the year 1790, Micki finds herself drawn to the Marquis even as she realizes she has no way home.

## *Freddy's Nightmares: A Nightmare on Elm Street: The Series (1988–1990)*

### CRITICAL RECEPTION

“Freddy ... just plain scares people, though most of their acting wouldn’t convince many people ... those who cherish any kind of horror tale will buy into the new series.”—*Variety*, October 19, 1988, page 496.

“A truly horrible horror show, *Freddy's Nightmares* became known mainly for its overabundance of violence and gore, causing the show to come under considerable criticism from parents and other viewers.”—Tony Bell, *Epi-Log* #39, February 1994, page 31.

“Tongue-in-cheek humor ... lifts *Freddy's Nightmares* above the jolt-'em-out-of-their-seats level of its theatrical namesakes. Freddy can still be one ruthless customer.... Most weeks ... he serves merely as the wisecracking narrator for unrelated stories revolving around dreams. Many are unexpectedly lighthearted; a few even approach satire.”—Richard Zoglin, *Time*, November 6, 1989, pages 88-90.

### FORMAT

*Freddy's Nightmares* is a strange anthology series. Each hour-long episode of this spin-off from the popular *Nightmare on Elm Street* franchise features a different human protagonist as he or she butts heads with the series’ host, Freddy Krueger. As all horror fans are aware, Krueger is a former child-murderer who was burned to death by the townspeople of the suburban hamlet Springwood when a legal technicality allowed him to get off scot-free. But when Krueger died in his boiler room, something worse was born from his ashes: he became a terrifying spirit capable of entering people’s dreams and killing them while they slumbered. So Krueger not only introduces each episode of his series, he interacts and influences the adventure at hand. This is an unusual set-up because Freddy’s presence as a “celebrity” host and series hero often results in evil’s ultimate triumph over good. Many stories feature unlikable human characters who get their just desserts, so often there is an absence of good altogether ... a fact which makes the series a less-than-enjoyable viewing experience.

Each episode of *Freddy's Nightmares* takes off with a sign overlooking a sleepy suburban town, a sign which reads “Welcome to Springwood.” This peaceful image is followed by several still shots of the town, and a white picket fence is superimposed over the montage. Children play in the background, cheerleaders rejoice at a football game, but then all turns dark as the front page of *The Springwood Gazette* announces: “Freddy Krueger released today.” Flames engulf the newspaper and the audience sees Freddy’s evil, burned face. He announces: “You’re in Springwood now ... and you’re all mine,” before things turn *really* ugly. The camera focuses on screaming faces and askew angles of Freddy’s boiler room. As the episode of the week begins, Freddy’s trademark razor glove slashes through the title card.

*Freddy's Nightmares* is a low-budget show which sometimes highlights extreme blood and violence in the name of entertainment. Special effects and opticals are held to a minimum, because of budgetary restraints. Freddy recounts each story from a house in Springwood, the haunted home of his first film nemesis, Nancy Thompson (actress Heather Langenkamp). Syndicated at the height of the horror cycle

in the late-80s, *Freddy's Nightmares* ran for two low-rated years and 44 episodes.

## HISTORY

Wes Craven had seen his very interesting, but very intense films (including *The Last House on the Left* [1972], *The Hills Have Eyes* [1977], *Deadly Blessings* [1981], *Swamp Thing* [1982]) meet with only spotty success until his 1984 venture, *A Nightmare on Elm Street*, changed his filmic track record forever. A modestly budgeted film from fledgling New Line Cinema, *Elm Street* grossed 26 million dollars in no time and created a revolution in horror imagery with its artful blending of dream states and reality. The horror show also made a star of its razor-gloved villain, Freddy Krueger, as well as his inimitable essayer, actor Robert Englund. The “rubber reality,” mind-bending terrors of *A Nightmare on Elm Street* proved so immensely provocative and popular that a string of high-grossing sequels soon followed Craven’s excellent original. *Freddy’s Revenge* (1985), *Dream Warriors* (1987), and *The Dream Master* (1988) all managed to out-gross the initial picture, with *Elm Street IV: The Dream Master* taking in more than 50 million dollars! So successful was the *Elm Street* film series that New Line became known as “The House That Freddy Built” in many industry circles. By this time, however, Wes Craven was no longer involved in the franchise he had initiated because he disapproved of New Line’s “fast food” approach to filmmaking. He also disliked the manner in which Freddy had become a cult hero (prone to making James Bond-style wise cracks as he dispatched innocent teenagers) when Krueger had in fact been created in the original film to represent “ultimate evil.” In 1991, during the height of a recession, Robert Englund described the original conception of Freddy:

This is the first time in the 20th century that kids will probably not live as well as their parents. You can imagine what it is like to be 17 ... and enter a world with a drug culture and hardly any jobs on the horizon, and AIDS and racial unrest ... Freddy represents all of these things that are out of kilter in the world, all the sins of the parents that are being passed on.<sup>1</sup>

Despite such an interesting premise for a silver-screen monster, Freddy soon became a watered-down “pop” hero. The year 1988 saw the pinnacle of the Freddy Phenomenon. Freddy dolls (which croaked “Let’s be friends!” and “Pleasant dreams!”), blow-up punching bags, calendars, novelizations, board-games, rap music, and the release of the fourth motion picture all contributed to the mania, as did New Line’s announcement that Freddy would soon be hosting his very own TV program in syndication. The move made perfect sense in that Paramount had already spun off its successful *Friday the 13th* film series to TV with impressive ratings. And, to most eyes, Freddy was more popular than his Paramount competitor. The danger, of course, was oversaturation.

So, *Freddy’s Nightmares* began in earnest, with Wes Craven totally uninvolved and uninterested in participating. A boon to the show was Robert Englund, who had agreed to reprise his makeup-heavy role in exchange for the opportunity to direct some episodes. Still, even the talented Englund was often left out to dry for lack of well-written stories and less-than-satisfactory support from unknown performers. Because *Freddy’s Nightmares* was a violent show, many coalitions, both for quality TV and representing religious “morality” groups, objected to it on principle. To deflect some of the early criticism, the following edict was highly-publicized as a statement of value regarding the series: “No one under the age of 18 will be murdered on this show.”<sup>2</sup>

With that in mind, *Freddy’s Nightmares* joined the syndication war the same season Laurel’s

*Monsters and Paramount's War of the Worlds* began. Other competition included the second seasons of *Star Trek: The Next Generation* and *Friday the 13th: The Series*. What made *Freddy's Nightmares* a little different was that it had been designed to air exclusively in the late night hours, so as to get away with a bit more gore and violence than was considered acceptable in prime time. And, though most local stations did air the syndicated show late into the night on Friday or Saturdays, others ignored the warnings and aired the show at 8:00 P.M. or earlier. Producer Robert Shaye sought to make *Freddy's Nightmares* more viable a viewing option by promising that it would take TV to a new place:

[it] will open up the medium and make use of it for what it is ... with sound as well as being free to use such gimmicks as 3-D and Odorama.<sup>3</sup>

Alas, these suggestions were mostly publicity hype, and gore was the only real draw of the series, not experimental camera work, not odoroma, and not 3-D photography.

The first 22 hour-long episodes of *Freddy's Nightmares* were produced fast (in six days each) and they ran in 106 markets, garnering strong initial ratings. Input from horror directors Tobe Hooper, Mick Garris, Dwight Little, and Tom McLoughlin indicated that the quality would be high, and even Robert Englund seemed satisfied with *Freddy's Nightmares'* results:

It's offering up a great deal of atypical television. The makeup and sense of humor are straight out of the *Nightmare* films, which automatically gives the show a leg up on just about anything currently on the air. The violence on the show is more surreal and more imaginative. It's no wonder we've occasionally had problems and delays with some of the special effects; doing a *Freddy's Nightmares* trick is not like filming a car chase.<sup>4</sup>

Not long into the first season, however, it became obvious to casual viewers and fans alike that the *Elm Street*-based TV series was lacking in two important factors: good stories and likable characters. Perhaps it had been a mistake to make antihero Fred Krueger the hero of the show, because the move immediately relegated all guest performers (such as George Lazenby and Timothy Bottoms) to the role of victim. Few people other than Freddy ended up being developed sufficiently. Furthermore, restrictions on violence also assured that *Freddy's Nightmares* could never be as intense as the film series which inspired it. Ratings dropped significantly, and life looked uncertain for the show. Even worse, the dreaded oversaturation effect took hold, and Freddy Krueger's fifth movie, *The Dream Child*, fared worse at the box office than any *Nightmare on Elm Street* sequel yet, despite the fact that it was probably the best successor to Craven's original. To add insult to injury, much of the Freddy Krueger merchandise was pulled from stores because parents felt the material was inappropriate for children.

Almost miraculously, *Freddy's Nightmares* did come back for a second season of 22 additional episodes. Producer Scott Stone reflected on the lessons learned from the first season while preparing episodes of the second:

We had some problems.... We found that people were not really identifying with the characters in the show. I think we did a good job of giving a lot of style and look to the show, but we often confused the audience as to where the story was going. And we'd get so wrapped up in the idea of dreams that we'd go into one without knowing how or why it would progress the story.<sup>5</sup>

With these problems in mind, the second season began with a slew of changes. The title of the series

was shortened to *Freddy's Nightmares* (lopping off the awkward *A Nightmare on Elm Street: The Series*), fewer teens were to be featured, more money was spent on casting adult actors such as Alex Cord, Dick Gautier, Mary Crosby, and Anne Lockhart, and the writing staff was increased considerably. Freddy's role also became more integral to the stories. Instead of just popping up occasionally to comment on the story, Freddy interacted with the rotating characters on a more regular basis. Despite efforts to improve the show, the series could not escape a few central problems. It still looked cheap (shot as it was on videotape), and the scripts, though better acted, were hardly improvements. Worse, the Freddy Phenomenon was really and truly coming to an end. The Moral Majority and other TV watchdog groups maintained their attacks on the show, and there was no way *Freddy's Nightmares* could survive ambushes from so many sides. About the battle against the religious right and the value of horror movies and television programs, Robert Englund had this to say:

I've been on several talk shows with psychiatrists, and they all say that the horror movie is very, very necessary. My own experience has been with terminally ill patients ... and they have a huge fascination for the horror movie. Being in the hospital wards, these movies take their minds off the very real horror in their own lives that they face.<sup>6</sup>

While undoubtedly true, one can always wish that *Freddy's Nightmares* had been a better example of horror form and quality. Censorship is universally a despicable thing, and the horror genre can be healthy and therapeutic, but the lackluster *Freddy's Nightmares* was never the perfect beachhead from which to launch such a progressive argument. After 44 episodes, *Freddy's Nightmares* folded. The villainous Freddy Krueger returned to the big screen in 1991 for his last "canon" *Elm Street* film, *Freddy's Dead: The Final Nightmare*. The film out-earned its predecessor by a solid ten million, but was still not a hit in the tradition (and gross) of the second or third sequel.

In 1994, on the tenth anniversary of the release of *A Nightmare on Elm Street*, Wes Craven directed *Wes Craven's New Nightmare*, an excellent film which reinvented Freddy Krueger and made some dramatic points about the role of horror in modern American society. By the time of this film, *Freddy's Nightmares* was all but forgotten. Today, several volumes of the series are available on videotape, and there is a long-standing rumor that Freddy will be back on the big-screen soon, battling Jason Voorhees, the hockey-masked killer of the *Friday the 13th* franchise.

## CRITICAL COMMENTARY

When a popular film or miniseries is "spun off" to become a weekly series, audiences are usually looking for a continuation of the themes, characters, settings, and ideas which sparked such interest in the production to begin with. Yet, oddly, TV has a long and ignoble history of adapting popular properties and then mutilating them to such an extent that the video offspring bears no resemblance or relation to the well-liked parent. Consider the TV version of *Logan's Run* (1977). It eliminated the popular palm life-clock concept of the feature, added a ruling human council to the computer-controlled City of Domes, and reduced Logan and Jessica's romantic relationship to a purely platonic one. The same kind of mangling went on with *V* (1985). Once a popular miniseries featuring alien-voiced reptilian extraterrestrials invading Earth to steal our water, on the weekly show the aliens spoke like humans and were not interested in water anymore. The original concept, good or bad, had been supplanted by a new regime bent on doing things differently. Sadly, the anthology series *Freddy's Nightmares* is but another example of this unfortunate story. So-called improvements were

made on the TV series which nearly destroyed the *Nightmare on Elm Street* property for good.

In 1984, *A Nightmare on Elm Street* was Wes Craven's gift to a floundering genre. It was a remarkably well-acted and directed chiller about a madman haunting a girl in her dreams. The unusual connection between killer and prey was forged because the young lady's parents had engineered the killer's death when a bureaucratic justice system released him. The sins of the father were then passed on to the daughter as Freddy wreaked revenge for his own murder. The film could be interpreted as an indictment of parents, of vigilante justice, or even middle America's attitudes about crime. It was a brilliant horror film, and one of the best so-called slasher pictures ever. In the first episode of the *Freddy's Nightmares* series, entitled "No More Mr. Nice Guy," director Tobe Hooper and writers Michael DeLuca and David Erhman managed to undercut the first film as well as established Freddy lore by being wholly unfaithful to Krueger's (and Craven's) established back story. The devil is in the details, and in the case of "No More Mr. Nice Guy," the details were all wrong.

Firstly, the pilot purports to tell viewers the story of Krueger's origin as a supernatural avenger—his death as a mortal (a tale already recounted beautifully by Nancy Thompson's mother Marge in *A Nightmare on Elm Street*). That's a fine starting point for the series, but the first blunder in execution involves the setting. A very much alive Krueger is set free for his crimes by the legal system ... in the 1980s! All the characters are seen to be dressed in '80s fashions and driving '80s cars! Of course, Freddy's trial and mortal end should have occurred a good decade before the events depicted in *A Nightmare on Elm Street*—some time in the early-to-mid 1970s to be exact.

Secondly, Wes Craven's film established that it was Detective Don Thompson (John Saxon) who apprehended Freddy in the first place. In "No More Mr. Nice Guy," there is no sign of John Saxon and no sign of Detective Thompson either, just a character named Lt. Blocker who fulfills the same function. If John Saxon was unavailable to reprise his film role, an unlikely event since he had just done so in 1987's *A Nightmare on Elm Street III: Dream Warriors*, then a younger actor who resembled him could have been cast in the role so that continuity with the feature film was maintained.

The original picture also established that Don and Marge Thompson were present at the burning of Freddy in his boiler room. In fact, they even ended up with his finger knives and hat, which they hid in their basement furnace. Yet, oddly, the burning is depicted in "No More Mr. Nice Guy" with neither Marge nor Don in evidence anywhere. *A Nightmare on Elm Street III: Dream Warriors* also established that only Don Thompson knew where Freddy's bones had been buried (a junkyard). Yet again, history is tossed aside in "No More Mr. Nice Guy" when several Springwood cops are openly aware of Krueger's final resting place. All this raises a very serious question in intent: Why continue a popular series if you have no intention of being faithful to what has come before? The answer: to make a lot of money with as little thought or care as possible!

Perhaps most importantly, "No More Mr. Nice Guy" changes Freddy into a two-dimensional *über* monster. In the original film, he was depicted as a disgusting little troll of a man, a loser, and outsider who became powerful only after his wrongful death. By contrast, the series treats Krueger (in life) not as a cowardly weasel preying on weak children in dark corners, but as evil incarnate, a powerful monster not at all afraid of the law or justice. Tobe Hooper engages a point-of-view subjective camera (from Freddy's perspective) which seems to indicate, through a distortion lens and odd color variations, that Freddy, as a mortal, is already an inhuman beast.



And, when Krueger is finally lit aflame by the Elm Street vigilantes (another discontinuity: in the film, the crowd burned down the *boiler room*; on TV, they douse *Freddy* himself and light him up), he actually encourages the act in a defiant tone. “You missed a spot! Light it! I dare you!” he croaks. Since it is *Freddy* himself who is torched, right down to his hat and skivvies, it is difficult to understand how his hat and glove survived to be kept as a keepsake by the Thompsons in the film *A Nightmare on Elm Street*. Essentially then, “No More Mr. Nice Guy” rewrites the entire *Elm Street* mythos so that Krueger is now a 2-D bad guy spitting out one-liners.

Other misconceived plotpoints also plague the pilot: Why does the Thompson house become *Freddy*’s house when the Thompsons are not even featured in the pilot? The answer: people associated the house of the films with *Freddy Krueger*, so it was kept for the TV series as a kind of “trademark,” although its presence no longer arises logically from the *Freddy* mythos. Why are people driving 1980s cars in the 1970s? Why is the haunting jump rope song of the original film ignored? Why does “No More Mr. Nice Guy” open with a newscaster being “beamed” from his news desk in the studio to the front steps of a courthouse, in literal but nonsensical *Star Trek* style? “No More Mr. Nice Guy,” which set the tone for the whole *Freddy’s Nightmares* series, is a rancid rip-off of a great film, a lazy hour interested only in exploiting a popular namebrand without studying why the property was good (and popular) in the first place.

As *Freddy’s Nightmares* continued (and the ratings dropped precipitously), the series grew worse and worse. The guest performers tended to be no-name unknowns who lacked either the technique or the ability to bring life to the weak material. The stories themselves were terrible, and the show tended to linger on sex (“Dreams That Kill” featured two sex scenes in one hour!) or gore to get it through the hour. *Freddy*’s one liners (“Stick that in your VCR and suck on it!” or “An apple a day won’t keep *Freddy* away!”) also degenerated to the point of absurdity as *Freddy’s Nightmares* limped through two dreadful seasons. Sadly, production values were atrocious to boot. The show was shot on what appeared to be a home video camera (making it the worst-looking TV program in modern terror TV since *The Next Step Beyond* in 1978). The lighting was so amateurish that *Freddy*’s supposedly terrifying haunted house looked more like a red and green disco filled with smoke than a spook’s frightening lair. It became obvious to anybody still watching that virtually no money was going into the production end of the show. There were no significant optical effects. In one egregious example of penny-pinching, the disappearance and reappearance of a character in “It’s My Party and You’ll Die if I Want You To” was accomplished merely by stopping and restarting the camera, a “materialization” gimmick so cheap that it has been used by every amateur filmmaker since the beginning of the medium. Also to save money, the same episode featured only two sets: a hotel bedroom and a hotel ballroom. This was the style of the whole series: to save dough, both half-hour stories in one hour used the same two sets. Economy should never be so obvious as it was in *Freddy’s Nightmares*.

The only arena in which *Freddy’s Nightmares* did not skimp was the gore. *Freddy*’s finger knives became whirring, monstrous dental drills in one adventure, and blood jetted like arterial spray from an intravenous tube in another, and so on. If watching people die in really horrid, but sometimes inventive, ways is your gig, then *Freddy’s Nightmares* is your dream show.

The presence of Robert Englund on any series would automatically spike the quality quotient, but many installments of *Freddy’s Nightmares* feature the gloved-one only in wraparound host segments. That is just one more crime of a bad series: it wastes a great horror performer and icon. Because it is unfaithful in its depiction of *Freddy Krueger*, so cheap-looking as to be embarrassing, and written

sloppily with only the death scenes revealing any imagination or energy, *Freddy's Nightmares* is this author's candidate for the worst horror anthology, and indeed, the worst horror series, of all time.

## CAST AND CREDITS

*Cast:* Robert Englund (Freddy Kreuger).

*Credits:* Based on a character created by: Wes Craven. Series Consultant: Robert Englund. Co-Executive Producer: Bill Froehlich. Producer: Gilbert Adler. Executive Producers: Robert Shaye, Scott A. Stone. Co-producer: Marcus Keys. Executive Story Consultant: David Braff. Executive Story Editor: Jonathan Glassner. Main Theme Composed by: Nicholas Pike. Score Composed by: Gary Scott. Director of Photography: David Calloway. Freddy Krueger Makeup: David Miller, Lou Lazzara. Production Designer: Gregory Melton. Unit Production Manager/Line Producer: Scott White. First Assistant Director: Kristi "Kat" Tyminski. Costume Designer: Giovanna Ottobre Melton. Edited by: Lou Angelo. Casting: Al Onorato, Jerrold Franks. Art Director: Masako Masuda. Set Decorator: Christopher Amy. Assistant Set Decorator: Natalie Hope. On Set Dresser: Andre Evaschen. Art Department Coordinator: Kristin Magoffin. Stunt Coordinator: Joe Stone. Camera Operator: Ray Wilbar. First Assistant Camera: Gina DeGirolamo. Second Assistant Camera: Jennifer Gilroy, Veronica Williams. Gaffer: Tim McGinnis. Key Grip: George Palmer. Electrical Best Boy: Mike Hennessey. Electricians: Laurence Copley, Monte Spillars, Terry Gilbert. Grip Best Boy: Rick Sutherland. Dolly Grip: Robert "Dog" Thomas. Grips: John Joseph Minardi, Brian J. Liberman. Production Sound Mixer: Joseph Geisinger. Boom Operator: Robert Maxfield. Second Boom/Cable: Lawrence L. Commans. Key Wardrobe: Karyn Wagner. Assistant Costume Designer: Taffye Wallace. Wardrobe Assistant: Carolyn A. Leone, Jan Masterson. Key Makeup and Hair: Lou Lazzara. Assistant Makeup and Hair: Vincent Tremonti, Tania McComans. Production Coordinator: Dawn Renee Todd. Assistant Production Coordinator: Stacy M. King. Assistant to Robert Shaye: Dorian Bregas. Assistant to S. Stone: Rochelle Shaposhnick. Assistant to G. Adler: Mary Nauheimer. Second Assistant Director: Sandy Hausch. Location Assistant: Steven Klar. Script Supervisor: Lainie Miller. Location Manager: Rick Rothen. Casting Assistant: Greg Steele. Extra Casting: Star Casting Services. Stand-in: Oliver Bodnar. Stand-in: Janet Keyser. Craft Services: Candace Lowell, Curry Marie Brown. Production Auditor: Ellen McGurrin. Assistant Auditor: Primrose Yuki Fukuchi. Script Coordinator: Timothy Tobin Kirk. Property Master: Adam Silverman. Assistant Prop Master: Gregory Scott Pfeiffer. Special Effects Coordinator: Andre G. Ellingson. Key Special Effects: Anthony Simonaitas. Special Effects: Randy Lee Tatum. Lead Man: John C. Liebig. Swing Gang: Steven R. Melton, Randolph W. Andell, John Roberts. Stage Manager: William C. Rainey. Post Production Supervisor: Phillip Hirsch. Post Production Coordinator: Todd Byrant. Assistant Editors: Robert Parigi, Sonia Beck. Post-Production Assistant: Shannon Kelley. Visual Effects Design Editor: David Foster. Post Production Sound Supervisor: Pat Griffith. Re-Recording Mixer: Sherri Klein. Sound Effects Design: Julie Moye, Tom Betz. Mixing Assistant: Erin Hoiem. Colorist: Bruce Pearson. Vidifont Operator: Enid Dalkoff. New Line Executive: Michael DeLuca. Main Title Design: Calico. Executive in Charge of Production: Bob Bain. Produced by Stone Television in association with New Line Cinema. Distributed by Warner Brothers Television.

## EPISODE GUIDE

• *First Season (1988–1989)*

**1. "No More Mr. Nice Guy"** Written by Michael De Luca, David Ehrman and Rhet Topham; Directed

by Tobe Hooper; airdate: October 9, 1988; *Guest Cast*: Ian Patrick Williams (Lieutenant Blocker); Anne Curry (Mrs. Blocker); Mark Herrier (Gene Stratton); William Frankfather (Deeks); Alba Francesca (Woman); Tyde Kierney (Doc); Gry Park (Lisa Blocker); Hili Parks (Merit Blocker); Gwen E. Davis (Judge); Tammara Souza (Mary Ann); Robert Goen (Reporter); Steven D. Reisch (Defense Attorney).

Fred Krueger, child murderer, is freed on a technicality at a pretrial hearing, outraging the good citizens of suburban Springwood and unleashing a new reign of terror. Detective Blocker is warned by his traumatized daughter not to kill Freddy because he will become more powerful in death, but Blocker ignores the warning and with a group of vigilantes torches Freddy in his boiler room hideout. After his death, Freddy returns in dreams as a horribly scarred avenging evil, and his first order of business is to terrorize Blocker and his twin daughters. Now Springwood's nightmares are just beginning.

**2. "It's a Miserable Life"** Written by Michael De Luca and Paul Rosselli; Directed by Tom McLoughlin; airdate: October 16, 1988; *Guest Cast*: Lar Park Lincoln (Karen); John Cameron Mitchell (Bryan); Burr DeBenning (Dr. Sterling); Peter Iacangelo (Dad); Nancy McLoughlin (E.R. Nurse); Annie O'Donnell (Mom); Tracy Shakespeare, Michael Melvin, Kyle Scott Jackson, Adam Karlen.

A young man caught in a shoot out experiences a terrifying nightmare. His girlfriend, who has a phobia of medical institutions, is also haunted by her worst nightmare: a devilish doctor with the inclination to be a real cut up.

**3. "Killer Instinct"** Written by Alan B. Ury; Directed by Mick Garris; airdate: October 23, 1988; *Guest Cast*: Lori Petty, Yvette Nipar, Kane Picoy, Lee Kessler, Anthony Barton, Stephen Franken, Clare Peck, Frederick Long.

"No guts, no glory" is the motto of the day as a high school track star is given a mysterious talisman which allows her to win races and destroy her competitors.

**4. "Freddy's Tricks and Treats"** Written by A.L. Katz and Gilbert Adler; Directed by Ken Wiederhorn; airdate: October 30, 1988; *Guest Cast*: Mariska Hargitay (Marsha); Darren Dalton (Zach); Daniel McDonald (Mark); Cameron Thor (Gary); Elsa Raven, Chuck Sloan, Don Maxwell, Anthony Palermo.

It is Halloween night, and Freddy Krueger is up to his old, murderous tricks. This time, he is out to teach a sexy coed the lesson that all work and no play makes her a dull (and dead) girl. After terrorizing the poor student, Freddy moves on to her friends and family.

**5. "Judy Miller, Come on Down"** Written by Jack Temchin and Michael De Luca; Directed by Tom DeSimone; airdate: November 6, 1988; *Guest Cast*: Susan Oliver (Maid); Siobhan E. McCafferty (Judy); John DeMita (Tom); Larry Anders, Georgia Dell, Charles C. Stevenson, Theresa Ring, Peggy Mannix, Jim Landis.

A game show from hell tempts an unhappy housewife. She can win a bundle and live her dream life, but to do so requires her to make a sacrifice in the persons of her husband and annoying in-laws. Will she buy a vowel, or choose to disembowel?

**6. “Saturday Night Special”** Written by James Nathan and Don Bollinger; Directed by Linda Gottlieb; airdate: November 13, 1988; *Guest Cast*: Shari Shattuck (Lana); Scott Burkholder (Gordon); Paul Lieber, Joyce Hyser, Mary Kelly, Molly Cleator, Robert Lesser, Jerry Colker.

In the first story, a man uses a dating service to get a date, but his would-be partner isn't what he had in mind. In the second, “beauty is only skin deep” is the moral of the day as a lonely woman seeks to enhance that which nature gave her.

**7. “Sister’s Keeper”** Written by Jeff Freilich and Michael De Luca; Directed by Ken Wiederhorn; airdate: November 20, 1988; *Guest Cast*: Gry Park (Lisa Blocker); Hili Parks (Merit Blocker); Anne Curry (Sara); Joshua Cox (John).

Freddy plans to exact revenge on the twin daughters of the Springwood policeman who engineered his capture and then death in the boiler room. Only the unusually strong link between the twin teenage girls can defend them from this revenge-happy ghoul.

**8. “Mother’s Day”** Written by David Ehrman; Directed by Michael Lange; airdate: November 27, 1988; *Guest Cast*: Elizabeth Savage (Sherry); Jill Whitlow (Barbara); Byron Thames (Billy); Judith Baldwin (Jane); Byron Morrow, Clyde Jones, Gwen E. Davis, Patrick Sherick.

The arrival of Mother’s Day in Springwood prompts two essays on the vicissitudes of the adolescent/mother relationship. In one, a young boy fears being replaced by a new father. In the second, a girl seeks attention from her radio show host mother.

**9. “Rebel Without a Car”** Written by Chris Trumbo; Directed by John Lafia; airdate: December 11, 1988; *Guest Cast*: Katie Barberi (Connie); Craig Hurley (Alex); Denise Loveday, Dianna Barrows, Chris Ufland, Richard Campus, Michele Seipp.

A teenage hot shot plans to flee the suburban hell of Springwood only to exchange one brand of torment for another. The cool guy’s girlfriend also comes to an unhappy end when she pledges a fancy college sorority only to be hazed and humiliated.

**10. “The Bride Wore Red”** Written by Howard Lakin; Directed by George Kaczender; airdate: December 18, 1988; *Guest Cast*: Diane Franklin (Jessica); Eddie Driscoll (Gavin); Katherine Moffat (Red); Gary Wood, Margaret Shinn, Susan Singer, Jake Jacobs.

Terror separates two people destined for holy matrimony. The groom-to-be is tempted to be unfaithful at his bachelor party, and the bride faces a resurgence of fears that she will end up the same way as her lonely, suffering mother.

**11. “Do Dreams Bleed?”** Written by Michael De Luca; Directed by Dwight Little; airdate: January 8, 1989; *Guest Cast*: Damon Martin (John); Sarah Buxton (Roni); Jeff McCarthy (Coach); Gloria Carlin, Arlette Stella, Joe Fause, Michael James.

A serial killer arrives in Springwood and starts generating a respectable body count—a fact all too clear to two high school students who find themselves linked to the psycho. A jealous Freddy dislikes competition in his own backyard.

**12. "The End of the World"** Written by James Cappe; Directed by Jonathan Betuel; airdate: January 15, 1989; *Guest Cast:* George Lazenby (Dr. Clark); Andrew Pine (Agent Stears); Terri Semper, Gloria Loring, Jack Manning, Mary Kohnert, Walter Gotell, Albert Hall.

A young woman with the ability to alter the destiny of others through her psychic powers fiddles with the space/time continuum once too often. Before long, the world teeters on nuclear oblivion because of her interference.

**13. "Deadline"** Written by Jill Sherman Donner; Directed by Michael Lange; airdate: January 29, 1989; *Guest Cast:* Page Hannah (Emily); Aaron Harnick, Timothy Brantley, Rebecca Stanley, Jeremy Roberts.

A reporter who writes the obituaries is compelled to witness each violent death he writes a capsule about. In the second story, a young woman who escaped the death of her friends by dating an older man is drawn closer to the death she averted.

**14. "Black Tickets"** Written by Howard Lakin; Directed by George Kaczender; airdate: February 5, 1989; *Guest Cast:* Brad Pitt (Rick); Kerry Brennan (Miranda); Karen Hensel, Lora Staley, Don Sparks, Bill Moseley, Jeff Austin, Jacob Kenner.

A young couple that has just eloped pauses in Springwood, and it is a layover they will not soon forget. Hoping to escape the expectations and demands of others in their lives, they find instead a terrible nightmare.

**15. "School Daze"** Written by David Ehrman; Directed by Michael Klein; airdate: February 12, 1989; *Guest Cast:* Andrew Kraus (Steve); Billy Morrissette (Matt); James Harper, Mitch David Carter, Michael P. Keenan, Patrick MacNamara, Lisa Fuller.

Two high school students experience real life terror when they prepare for the SATS, and a life out there in "the real world."

**16. "Cabin Fever"** Written by Rhet Topham; Directed by Robert Englund; airdate: February 19, 1989; *Guest Cast:* Brett Cullen (Carl); Lezlie Dean (Sue); Ted J. Demeers (Jim); William Shockley.

It is a nightmare at 20,000 feet when the crew and passengers of an air liner are terrorized by the negligence of one passenger's father, an airplane mechanic. In the second story, a stewardess goes out with an unusual passenger against her better judgment and discovers that he has a most unusual hobby.

**17. "Love Stinks"** Written by Michael De Luca and Jeff Freilich; Directed by John Lafia; airdate: February 26, 1989; *Guest Cast:* Jeffrey Combs (Ralph); George Olden (Max); Tamara Glynn, Josh Washington, Susanna Savee.

It's a case of mistaken identities when one man's declaration of love falls on the wrong ears. In the second story, a part-time job at an evil pizzeria vexes a recently graduated Springwood high school student.

**18. "The Art of Death"** Written by Michael De Luca and Ken Wiederhorn; Directed by Ken Wiederhorn; airdate: March 12, 1989; *Guest Cast:* Carey Scott (Jack); Laura Schaeffer (Joan); Stuart

Fratkin, Judd Omen.

An aspiring artist is pushed toward the brink of insanity (and homicidal behavior) when he finds that his art is guided by a new muse: Freddy Krueger! In the second story, a survivor of the artist's reign of terror finds herself experiencing déjà vu all over again.

**19. "Missing Persons"** Written and directed by Jeff Freilich; airdate: May 7, 1989; *Guest Cast:* Timothy Bottoms (Mr. Franklin); Eva La Rue, Nancy Linari, David Dunard, Sabrina Howells, Bryan Beck.

A beautiful babysitter balloons up into an obese monstrosity while looking after two demonic children. In the second story, a married man wonders how his life might be different if he didn't have to contend with his irritating wife.

**20. "Freddysomething"** Written by James Cappe; From a story by James Cappe and Jonathan Betuel; Directed by Jonathan Betuel; airdate: May 14, 1989; *Guest Cast:* Dick Miller (Kramer); David Arnott (Michael); Steven Keats (Murray); Dana Stevens, Stephen Burks, Lisa Raphael, Greg Davis.

A fear of the dark spurs the first story as an out-of-work man reluctantly accepts a job in the Springwood sewer system which will keep him out of the light permanently. In the second story, a video store and its owner figure in a tale of revenge.

**21. "Identity Crisis"** Written by Rebecca J. Pogrow; Directed by David Calloway; airdate: May 21, 1989; *Guest Cast:* Jeff Conaway (Buddy); Gabe Jarrett (John); Kimberly Kates (Christina); Patricia Estrin, Hank Stratton, David Kagen, Walter Caldwell, Patricia Daniels.

A mid-life crisis spurs an examination of a forty year old's less-than-sterling life. He starts to fear that his son represents all the '80s ideals that, as a youngster of the '60s, he despises. In the second story, a girl questions her parentage and dreams of a place she may have once called home.

**22. "Safe Sex"** Written by David J. Schow; Directed by Jerry Olson; airdate: May 28, 1989; *Guest Cast:* Devon Pierce, Patrick Day, Andy Woodworth, Jake Jacobs.

A young virgin becomes obsessed about "scoring" with an icy, strange beauty who has a taste for the dark side. In the second story, the beauty gets her comeuppance when Freddy Krueger arrives to show her the real heartbreak of romance.

• *Second Season (1989–1990)*

**23. "Dream Come True"** Written by Tom Blumquist and Tom Lazarus; Directed by George Kaczender; airdate: October 8, 1989; *Guest Cast:* David Kaufman (Randy); Scott Marlow (Dr. Keffler); Linda Miller (Cathy); Charles Cyphers, Jay Thomas, Bruch Marchiano.

A psychotherapist has the audacity to believe that the nightmares caused by Freddy Krueger can be dealt with in clinical terms. In response, Freddy employs some therapy of his own. In the second story, a reporter investigates Freddy, but ends up uncovering a personal horror.

**24. "Heartbreak Hotel"** Written by Jonathan Glassner; Directed by William Malone; airdate: October 15, 1989; *Guest Cast:* Terri Semper, Gloria Loring (Ellen); John Stinson (Roger); Tiffany

Helm, Stacy Keach Sr. (George); Jack Manning (Tom); Anne Lockhart (Rachel).

Another reporter comes to Springwood, this one in search of “Elvis.” What he finds, however, is not the King of Rock and Roll, but the king of horror. In the second story, an amnesiac realizes that some things are best left forgotten when he recovers his long-lost memory.

**25. “Welcome to Springwood”** Written by A.L. Katz and Gilbert Adler; Directed by Ken Wiederhorn; airdate: October 22, 1989; *Guest Cast:* Leah Ayres (Roxanne); Michael Horton (Doug); Todd Allen, Dey Young, Brenda Cooper.

A middle-class couple relocates to Springwood but is hampered on their arrival by a moving day mix up; their belongings have been exchanged for those of someone with a real tendency towards excessively antisocial behavior. In the second story, another set of homeowners become embroiled in an old mystery, a deadly love triangle turned sour.

**26. “Photo Finish”** Written by William Froelich; Directed by Tom De Simone; airdate: October 29, 1989; *Guest Cast:* Patty Cormack, Gay Thomas, Lisa Aliff, Kristina Loggia, Patrick Waddell, Jason Wingreen, Warren Burton.

A photographer in need of some success decides to photograph some gruesome material to help boost her career. Such a talent can not go unnoticed for long, however, and Freddy Krueger gives her work his critical stamp of approval. In the second story, a profiler gets too far into the head of a killer, becoming psychotic himself.

**27. “Memory Overload”** Written by Michael Kirscehnbaum; Directed by Don Weiss; airdate: November 5, 1989; *Guest Cast:* Alex Cord, Andrew Prine, Joseph Cali, Bill Baker, Sharon Mahoney, Darren Landry.

In the first story, a college professor inserts himself into a domestic squabble and finds himself on the hotseat for his interference. In the second tale of horror, a credit agency clerk gets a little too big for her britches, until brought down to size by her seemingly sentient computer.

**28. “Lucky Stiff”** Written by David Braff; Directed by William Malone; airdate: November 12, 1989; *Guest Cast:* David Lander, Mary Crosby (Greta); Richard Eden, Tracey Walter (Eugene).

A murderous wife is ecstatic when her deceased husband wins the lottery. Recently remarried, the murderess must recover her first husband’s ticket (which was with him when he died) and think of a way to dispose of her second husband so as not to have to share her ill-gotten winnings.

**29. “Silence Is Golden”** Written by Jonathan Glassner; Directed by Chuck Braverman; airdate: November 19, 1989; *Guest Cast:* Jeff Yagher (Rick); Sherry Hursey (Sheila); Gretchen Palmer (Tracy); Steve Franken, Phil Esposito, Craig Peters, Albie Selznick, Bart Braverman.

A nasty radio show host gets his comeuppance when he meets one mean mime. Later, turnabout is fair play as the mime in turn gets his comeuppance.

**30. “Bloodlines”** Written by Gilbert Adler and A.L. Katz; Directed by James Quinn; airdate: November 26, 1989; *Guest Cast:* Marc Alaimo (Woody); Sheree North (Joyce); Chris Nash (Jack);

Ruth DeSosa, Melanie Tomlin, Irina Chasen, Walter Addison, Ed Lorrimer.

A man escapes from prison, only to find his wife and grown son filled with hatred and contempt for him. In the second story, a boy grows up to be something terrible while his concerned mother wonders who his father really was.

**31. “Monkey Dreams”** Written by Michael Kirschenbaum; Directed by Robert Englund; airdate: December 3, 1989; *Guest Cast:* Joe Cali (Joe); Rick Dano (Bob); Sharon Mahoney (Jeannie); Sherman Howard, Eileen Seely, Rick Zumwalt, Charles Champion, Alan Berger.

A scientist is in deep to the mob because of his gambling addiction, but his experiments might just get him out of trouble if he makes a breakthrough. In the second story, the issue of animal rights is explored as an exploitive scientist has the tables turned on him.

**32. “Do You Know Where Your Kids Are?”** Written by Wayne Rice; Directed by William Froelich; airdate: December 10, 1989; *Guest Cast:* Courtney Gebhart (Patty); Suzanne Tara (Lisa); Sharon Farrell, Jeannie Lewis, Chris Nash, Brad Hunt.

Another babysitter finds terror when she is confronted with a mystery: What is in the locked basement, and why can't she go down there? In the second story, a delusional mother wishes that her dead daughter would come back from the grave.

**33. “Dreams That Kill”** Written by Tom Blumquist; Directed by Tom De Simone; airdate: December 17, 1989; *Guest Cast:* Christina Belford (Dr. Weiss); Christian Bocher (Mark Steven Lindstrom); Nicholas Cascone (Dr. Erwin); Dick Gautier (Charlie Nichols); Deborah Rennard (Britt); Phyllis Franklin (Enid); Bobby Ferguson (Mom Lindstrom); Nicholas Gunn (Monkey Puke); Brian Sheehan (Evan); Marsha Burrs (Nurse #2); Delores Mitchell (Nurse #1); Don Perry (Scotty).

The acerbic host of *Springwood Confidential*, a popular local TV talk show, is ordered by Freddy Krueger to “axe” a segment on “dreams that kill,” or suffer dire consequences in his own slumber. After he is injured in an on-air brawl, the host finds himself a guest of Freddy’s talk show: *Springwood Nightmares* ... being grilled alive. Later, the ambitious Dr. Erwin tends to the comatose host (who is being terrorized perpetually by Freddy) and transplants his brain cells into that of an 18-year-old boy who has been badly injured in a motorcycle accident. The transplant goes well until young Mark Lindstrom begins to experience strange dreams starring none other than Mr. Fred Krueger.

**34. “It’s My Party and You’ll Die if I Want You To”** Written by Jonathan Betuel and James Cappe; Directed by James Cappe; airdate: December 24, 1989; *Guest Cast:* Francois Giroday (Larry Delson); Greg Monaghan (Barry Dean); Barbara Treutelaar (Denise Charlotte); Joy Baggish (Cindy Schibe); Gwen Banta (Mara Ruleen); Russell Lindsey (Detective Pete Ortega); Nicholas Shaffer (Howard Nehamkin).

Freddy Krueger possesses a beautiful (but false) medium as she tries to channel the spirit of William Murdoch, first mate on the *Titanic*. Freddy’s intervention in her affairs leads to a series of grisly deaths in the hotel room where the psychic convention is being held. Later, in the same hotel, a Springwood class reunion for the class of 1970 goes sour when the surviving classmates of Freddy Krueger are murdered by the sleep demon. Inspired by the deaths, a writer who once befriended



Freddy Krueger puts together a script for a film called *A Nightmare on Elm Street*.

**35. “What You Don’t Know Can Kill You”** Written by Jonathan Glassner; Directed by Ken Wiederhorn; airdate: January 7, 1990; *Guest Cast:* Phillip Proctor (Dr. Crowley); David Hern, Fran Montano, Rochelle Carson, Paul Regina, Rosalind Ingledew, Mary Gillis, Michael Gregory, Roger Kern.

A hypnotherapist with many enemies has been hypnotizing his clients into doing his dirty work for him. When a colleague finds out, the therapist realizes murder is called for. In the second story, a man on the run has plastic surgery which heightens his notoriety rather than shielding his identity.

**36. “Easy Come, Easy Go”** Written by David Braff; Directed by William Malone; airdate: January 14, 1990; *Guest Cast:* Mary Crosby (Greta); Tracey Walter (Eugene); Wings Hauser (Sonny); Richard Eden, Jill Jacobson.

Greta, the murderous woman who killed two husbands to keep a fortune from a winning lottery ticket, is back to her old tricks. This time, Greta becomes embroiled in blackmail, and a family feud involving her sister and sister’s husband.

*Note:* This is a sequel to the episode “Lucky Stiff.”

**37. “Prime Cut”** Written by Michael Kirschenbaum; Directed by David Calloway; airdate: January 21, 1990; *Guest Cast:* Tony Dow (Johnny); Sandahl Bergman (Morgan); Chris Stanley, Donovan Scott, Amy Lyndon.

“You are what we eat” is the theme of this episode, as both stories involve cannibalism. In the first, three campers are enticed to the slaughter by a sexy guide who develops a taste for human flesh. In the second, two airplane crash survivors must decide which of them should be on the menu first.

**38. “Interior Loft”** Written by David Braff; Directed by Ken Wiederhorn; airdate: January 28, 1990; *Guest Cast:* Robert Lyons (Alex); Margot Rose (Molly); Dean Fortunato (Art); David Gilman, Elizabeth Keifer, Eric Stromer.

Another starving artist comes up with a plan to make his work profitable. This time, the stunt involves the faking of his own death. In the second tale, the owners of a 1-900 “phone sex” company are shocked to discover that their phone fantasies are coming real in a very disturbing way.

**39. “Interior Loft—Later”** Written by Jonathan Glassner; Directed by Ken Wiederhorn; airdate: February 4, 1990; *Guest Cast:* David Gilman (David); Elizabeth Keifer, Ron Max, Dean Fortunato, Tracy Pulliam, Michael Black.

This time it is a writer who ends up engineering horror through her own ambitions. In the second story, “three’s *not* company” when a would-be threesome does not come off quite as a Casanova plans.

**40. “Funhouse”** Written by A.L. Katz and Gilbert Adler; Directed by Gilbert Adler; airdate: February 11, 1990; *Guest Cast:* Clayton Landey (Robert Palmer); Todd Allen (Turk); Robin Greer (Emma); Valerie Wildman (Evelyn).

Two stories revolve around a haunted house and the sexual infidelities of its owners.

**41. “A Family Affair”** written by David Braff; Directed by Keith Samples; airdate: February 18, 1990; *Guest Cast*: Leonard Turner (Paul Woodman); Kim Morgan Greene (Clare); Marlene Warfield (Helen); Morris Chestnut (Jason); Leonard Donato, Gina Gallego.

It’s a case of “fatal attraction” when a man’s infidelity ends up destroying his family. Years later, the horror returns when the man’s son learns all the wrong lessons from his father’s mistakes.

**42. “Dust to Dust”** Written by William Froelich, David Braff and Jonathan Glassner; Directed by William Froelich; airdate: February 25, 1990; *Guest Cast*: Sandahl Bergman (Ginger); Amy Lyndon (Mary); Tony Dow (Johnny); Tim Russ (Dr. Picard); Martha Smith, Richard Brestoff, Janet Keyser.

Springwood’s cannibal population is unable to restrain itself, and three struggling cannibals indulge their addiction. Unfortunately, they have eaten a person contaminated with a deadly disease. The cannibals discover that in this case, the cure is actually worse than the disease.

*Note*: This episode is a sequel of sorts to “Prime Cut.”

**43. “Prisoner of Love”** Written by Richard Beban; Directed by Richard T. Schor; airdate: March 4, 1990; *Guest Cast*: Vincent Baggetta (Father Jarvis); Maria Richwine (Violet); Tara Buckman (Brenda); John Milford (Warden); Serina Grant, Biff Yeager.

A priest finds himself uncontrollably attracted to a death-row inmate due to be executed. He plots to spring her from the joint, and then must commit murder to protect his lustful and illegal secret.

**44. “Life Sentence”** Written by David Zuckerman; Directed by Anita Addison; airdate: March 11, 1990; *Guest Cast*: Penny Johnson (Elaine); George de la Pena (Andy); John Milford (Warden); Ray Cruz, Glynn Turman, Jolina Mitchell.

The series returns to the prison seen in episode #43 as a convicted murderer is caught between a rock and a hard place. The warden of Springwood Prison (seen also in the previous episode, “Prisoner of Love”) is desperate to be re-elected and he ends up tying his own noose when he authorizes the use of an experimental drug.

## *Monsters (1988–1991)*

### CRITICAL RECEPTION

“Most of the well-produced and frequently irreverent shows in this anthology series provided a good scare, like those old midnight terror tales on radio. The monsters were wonderfully gross and delightfully gruesome ... a particular favorite among horror aficionados.”—Alvin H. Marill, Peter Napolitano, *Blockbuster Entertainment Guide to Television on Video*, 1997, pages 498-499.

“*Monsters* ranges from the sublimely innovative to the outrageously ridiculous ... on the whole, good viewing.”—Ty Power, *Dreamwatch #6: “Monsters, Thrills, Chills, and Suspense,”* February 1995, page 24.

“Snazzy makeup and special effects ... are the stars of *Monsters*, a lively half-hour anthology, which each week delivers just what is advertised: a grotesque and usually malevolent creature.... Even when *Monsters’* stories are predictable and thin, the show is enlivened by grisly good humor.”—Richard Zoglin, *Time*, November 6, 1989, pages 88-90.

### FORMAT

*Monsters* is the Laurel follow-up to the successful *Tales from the Darkside* anthology, with a bit of a twist. In each and every episode of this new series, a grisly monster is given prominent display, and is an integral part of the story. The monster could be a blubbery, living cancer (“The Feverman”), a vampire (“The Vampire Hunter”), an animatronic doll come to life (“Holly’s House”), a corpse arisen from the swamp (“The Match Game”), a demoness from another dimension (“The Waiting Room”), an awakened dinosaur (“Sleeping Dragon”), a rubbery little lizard grown from a cereal box gift (“Mr. Swlabr”), or just about anything else the creative staff could dream up and execute on a low budget.

Like its popular predecessor, *Monsters* is done on the cheap and it follows a rigid production formula which might best be described in this manner: three actors, two sets, and a monster. Also, like *Darkside*, *Monsters* usually highlights the talents of at least one well-known “name” performer. Otherwise, many *Tales from the Darkside* writers are onboard *Monsters* with little change in core concepts or tone.

All *Monsters* episodes open the same way. We start high up in the sky, looking down through parting white clouds at a segment of a green continent. After a dissolve, the camera is a little bit closer to the surface, and gazing down on an average suburban neighborhood. After another dissolve, the camera is even further down, gazing straight down at a middle-class tract house. After a quick cut to the inside of the home, the audience sees a cyclops woman, dressed in 1950s-style housewife clothes and apron, wheeling dinner into the living room. Her daughter, also a cyclops, is excited about the meal, but her couch-potato husband is unhappy with the programs on TV until he sees *Monsters*: the family’s favorite program! The couch potato (wearing glasses) leans forward excitedly, as the show is about to begin. The title *Monsters* then comes up against a blue background. To the sound of a squeaky door opening, the title, and background split open to reveal the beginning of the play.

There is no opening or closing narration in this late '80s anthology, but every show ends with the card: "This series is dedicated to the memory of Tom Allen." The late Allen had been story editor on *Tales from the Darkside* and creative consultant on *Monsters* before his untimely passing.

## HISTORY

The late '80s saw an absolutely unprecedented growth in syndicated genre programming. The big-budget, high-quality *Star Trek: The Next Generation* captured stellar ratings when it began its seven-year cycle in 1987. By the fall of 1988, the syndicated market was flooded with new shows, all competing for a piece of the same audience. *The Untouchables*, *War of the Worlds*, *Freddy's Nightmares*, *The Munsters Today*, and the returning *Friday the 13th: The Series* (which also started in 1987) all offered exciting new alternatives for bored viewers not married to the programming of the increasingly stodgy networks. Though this proliferation was great news for the sci-fi and horror genres, at least one established series had a problem. When Laurel's *Tales from the Darkside* premiered in 1984, it had achieved solid ratings not only because it had a fair-to-high level of story quality, but because it was the only new off-network genre show of its day. It was a horror oasis in a cathode galaxy devoid of the macabre. By 1988, however, *Tales from the Darkside* was just another option, an undistinguished part of a large pack. Worse, it did not have the comparatively large budget of Paramount's *Friday the 13th: The Series* or the instant name recognition of the new *Freddy's Nightmares*, which was based on the blockbuster *Nightmare on Elm Street* film franchise and which even retained the film series' star, Robert Englund. And, after four years on the air, *Tales from the Darkside* was at a quality nadir and dismissed by some as a known quantity. It was old news, and not necessarily good news. Most series, no matter how good to start, begin to stagnate at the four year mark. *Darkside* was no exception. Laurel's innovative response to this crisis was to create a new show out of the ashes of the old. *Monsters* could counteract all the problems of *Darkside*. To wit: a title and concept change gave *Monsters* an additional boost, as did the fact that, for the horror knowledgeable, it had impeccable credentials.

Horror fans knew Laurel was the home of legendary horror director George Romero, and *Tales from the Darkside* boasted a substantial horror fan following, so *Monsters* did have some initial advantages to fans. To broaden that base, a new monster was to be showcased each week on *Monsters*. And, delightfully, the best of Hollywood showed up to lend visual spice to the new anthology. The Chiodo Brothers (creature creators of *Critters* [1986], *Killer Klowns from Outer Space* [1988], and the new *Land of the Lost* [1991–1993]) birthed the titular beast of "Sleeping Dragon," a kind of dinosaur/humanoid hybrid with an appetite for flesh. Tom Woodruff Jr. and Alec Gillis, the makers of the impressive subterranean worms in the popular *Tremors* (1989) and the designers of the new alien in *Alien*<sup>3</sup>, created the swampy, reanimated corpse seen in "The Match Game." Other contributors of ghouls and monsters included Steve Johnson ("Talk Nice to Me"), Ken Walker ("Glim-Glim"), Mark Shostrum ("Rouse Him Not"), and Michael Barnett Productions ("Rain Dance"). Stop motion photography from Fantasy II Film Effects was even incorporated into "Mannekins of Horror." Appropriately then, the horrific beasts were the highlight of *Monsters*, and even advertised as such by the show's creators. "A new creature featured every week!" the advertisements promised. To a generation which had grown up with *Famous Monsters of Filmland*, such a lure was irresistible.

Still, *Monsters* had to struggle for every rating point it won. Indicative of the far more competitive era in which it was born, *Monsters* first season signed up only 78 stations nationwide (barely 80 percent coverage of the United States) as opposed to the whopping 125 stations *Tales from the Darkside* had

bedded during its run. To further buttress the show, Dick Smith, special effects legend for *The Exorcist* [1974]), was given the highly publicized but mostly ceremonial title of series special effects consultant (though he did find himself applying makeup for the first episode, “The Feverman”).<sup>1</sup> *Monsters* was also heavily promoted in the trades, with clever ad lines like “Look What They’re Hatching Now!” and “Discover *Monsters* ... because there’s more than dust bunnies under your bed!” *Monsters* also held on to life by pointing out (in large ads with attractive bar graphs) that while *Freddy’s Nightmares*’ ratings had plummeted after heavy curiosity viewing for its premiere, *Monsters* had shown a 55 percent growth over the first month it aired.

Indeed, *Monsters* ratings grew as it developed and got better, and the series frequently succeeded in the 11:00 P.M. or later time slots in such cities as Chicago and Richmond (where it aired on Fox channel 35 on Saturday nights along with *Star Trek: The Next Generation*, *War of the Worlds*, and *Freddy’s Nightmares*).

Inheriting *Tales from the Darkside*’s B-movie feel, *Monsters* was a low-budget affair through and through. Most of the front-end money went to the creature of the week, two minimalist interior sets, and a high-profile lead performer. The shows were shot fast and efficiently, but the fast pace and budgetary limitations also energized the show’s creators. As writers Bob Schneider and Peg Haller told *Fangoria*:

It’s sort of like working in the old B-movie era ... one of the things that’s great about *Monsters* is it’s good for writers. Because of the limited special effects and limited sets, a lot of it has to be done with dialogue and characters ... the situation demands that you come up with a concept that really works.<sup>2</sup>

The human stars on *Monsters* came in three basic categories. The first was “the old favorites,” the familiar actors who had starred in other series, but had passed their prime and were appealing mostly to the nostalgia set. The old favorites included *The Man from U.N.C.L.E.* star David McCallum in “The Feverman,” Robert Lansing (Gary Seven of *Star Trek*’s “Assignment Earth”) in “The Vampire Hunter,” rock stars Meat Loaf and Deborah Harry in “Where Is the Rest of Me?” and “Desirable Alien” respectively, Laraine Newman (*Saturday Night Live*) in “Rouse Him Not,” Jeff Conaway (*Taxi*, *Wizards and Warriors*) in “Fools’ Gold,” Frank Gorshin (*Batman*) in “Parents from Space,” Soupy Sales in “The Farmer’s Daughter,” Anne Meara and Jerry Stiller in “One Wolf’s Family,” Troy Donahue in “Micro Minds” and Juliet Mills in “Outpost.” The second category was “contemporary popular,” actors who already had series on the air and popularity to boot, but came over to *Monsters* for a week of fun and games. *The Cosby Show*’s Tempestt Bledsoe starred in “My Zombie Lover,” *Night Court*’s Richard Moll headlined in “The Demons,” *Star Trek: The Next Generation*’s Wil Wheaton graced “Shave and a Haircut, Two Bites,” and singer Laura Branigan appeared with in-your-face talk show host Morton Downey, Jr., in “A Face for Radio.”

The next category of lead performer was another facet of *Monsters*’ popularity with horror fans. It regularly featured horror veterans like Linda Blair (*The Exorcist*) in “La Strega,” Ashley Laurence (*Hellraiser* [1987], *Hellbound: Hellraiser II* [1989]) in “The Match Game,” Linda Thorson (*The Avengers* [1968-69]) in “A New Woman,” Glynis Barber (*Blake’s 7* [1978-81]) in “Mannekins of Horror,” John Saxon (*A Nightmare on Elm Street* [1984], *A Nightmare on Elm Street III: Dream Warriors* [1987], *Wes Craven’s New Nightmare* [1994]) and, of course, the ubiquitous Darren McGavin (*Kolchak: The Night Stalker*) in “Portrait of the Artist.”

Finally, *Monsters* achieved a level of immortality (like *The Twilight Zone*) by featuring early performances by actors who have gone on to be TV and movie stars of the new generation. Tori Spelling of *Beverly Hills 90210* [1990-2000] appeared in “The Match Game.” Rob Morrow (*Northern Exposure* [1990–1994]) starred in “La Strega.” Gina Gershon (*Showgirls* [1996]) graced “Jar.” *Friends* [1995-?] star Matt LeBlanc faced vampires in “Shave and a Haircut, Two Bites.” *Homicide* [1995-1999] detective Richard Belzer investigated a werewolf in “Werewolf of Hollywood” and even the beautiful and talented Lili Taylor (*Dogfight* [1992], *The X-Files*: “Mind’s Eye,” *The Haunting* [1999]) gave *Monsters* a go in “Habitat.” With such interesting and varied support in the acting category, *Monsters* was almost always amusing, if not scary.

The rest of the *Tales from the Darkside* formula remained intact: economical (read: cheap) shooting on two coasts at the same time (Astoria Studios in New York; Hollywood Stage Studios in Los Angeles), and stories from the likes of Robert Bloch (“The Legacy,” “Mannekins of Horror”) and regular *Tales from the Darkside* contributors (Michael Reaves, Edythe Swensen). What worked before worked again, and *Monsters*, the little anthology that could, outlived *The Untouchables*, *Freddy’s Nightmares*, and *War of the Worlds* (all of which lasted two seasons), saw the rise and fall of one season syndication wonders (*She Wolf of London* [1990–1991], *Dracula: The Series* [1990–1991]) and even matched *Friday the 13th: The Series’* three year, 72 episode run, but at half the cost. *Monsters* was finally canceled in 1991, while *Star Trek: The Next Generation* was still a hit, and it died before the next big syndication war of the mid-90s (when the combatants included *Xena: Warrior Princess* [1995-?], *Hercules: The Legendary Journeys* [1994-?], *Highlander* [1992–1997], *Star Trek: Deep Space Nine* [1993–1999], *Babylon 5* [1994–1999], *Earth: The Final Conflict* [1997-?], the new *Outer Limits* [1995-?], *Poltergeist: The Legacy* [1996-1999], *Stargate SG1* [1997-?], *The Adventures of Sinbad* [1997–1998], *Conan* [1998], and *The New Adventures of Robin Hood* [1998-?]). Although Laurel has not followed up with a third E.C.-style horror anthology, *Monsters* has become a staple of the Sci-Fi Channel. In 1998 it was run at length during the 11:00 A.M. weekday time slot (after *Night Gallery* and *The Ray Bradbury Theater*). In 1999, it moved to a less visible once-a-week late night berth at 3:00 A.M.

## CRITICAL COMMENTARY

The *Monsters* anthology, like *Tales from the Darkside*, falls somewhere in the middle of the pack of the horror anthology ranks. It is certainly better than *Freddy’s Nightmares*, *The Hitchhiker*, or *Quinn Martin’s Tales from the Unexpected*, but its cheap visuals are a major factor which prevents it from attaining status as a real high quality show. And, like the final season or so of *Tales from the Darkside*, *Monsters* tends to veer off into campy, overplayed humor when the ability to genuinely scare is beyond its budgetary constraints.

In a time when other anthologies were about gore (*Freddy’s Nightmares*) or nudity and gratuitous sex (*The Hitchhiker*), it is rewarding to report that *Monsters* has, if not visual flair, at least a heart and a conscience to go with the showcased “bear” every week. The series is not above advocating moral standpoints, and is actually fairly didactic in its approach to the human condition. In the serio-comic “One Wolf’s Family,” a werewolf (Jerry Stiller) will not grant permission for his daughter to marry a were-hyena because of old, ingrained prejudices (“You hyenas are all alike!” he shouts, playing a hirsute Archie Bunker). The setting of the story is a tense family dinner as Mom (Anne Meara) and Pop Werewolf, of the Old Country, meet the American were-hyena in question. “One Wolf’s Family” is a kind of horror riff on *Guess Who’s Coming to Dinner* (1968) that has more to do with racism and

discrimination than it does the particulars of the monsters it portrays. The good but old-fashioned werewolves, remembering that the United States is a melting pot which accepted *them*, realize they have a duty to do likewise for the young interloper. In other words, the story is about immigrants, the selfishness of those who have “made” it here, and racial tolerance. It just happens to star werewolves.

Actually, a fair number of *Monsters* episodes focused on the problems of racism, perhaps because the late '80s represented a particularly ugly time on this front. The Tawana Brawley incident, the Howard's Beach problem, George Bush's ugly and cynical “Willie Horton” campaign gambit, and the growing gulf between the rich and the poor had made America a less-tolerant nation than it had been the decade before. These influences did not go unnoticed on *Monsters* episodes such as “My Zombie Lover,” starring *Cosby Show* actress Tempestt Bledsoe. In this tale, it is about 20-plus years since the events of George Romero's classic *Night of the Living Dead* (1968). Every year, for one scary night, the dead walk the Earth again. A middle-class, American black family celebrates this night (like the rest of the town) as if it is a holiday, and Mom and Pop go out to shoot unsuspecting zombies in the head. But then their daughter (Bledsoe) does the unthinkable and falls in love with a zombie! The relationship is difficult at first, primarily because of racial differences. “I know you zombies, you only have one thing on your mind,” Bledsoe asserts, referring not to sex, but the eating of human flesh! Then the parents, especially the zombie-killing father, must learn to accept the idea that their daughter would marry somebody of a different social class. Thus the zombies, the new minority in this make-believe world, aren't the real monsters. Because, as “My Zombie Lover” declares, “monsters can be people who think ugly.” The message may be obvious, even childish, and the humor is certainly ridiculous (“I'll always be part girlfriend and part sandwich,” Bledsoe bemoans early on, of her zombie boyfriend), but the point about racism and interracial relationship is worthwhile, if zany presented.

Just the notion of a “bad” TV sitcom set in a post-*Night of the Living Dead* world is by itself bold, but then to lace it with social commentary is unexpected and even disarming. The excesses (especially in the exhausting and tired depiction of a pre-adolescent wisecracking brother, like Gary Coleman on *Diff'rent Strokes*) are forgivable.

Other *Monsters* entries follow through on the didactic challenge thrown down by “One Wolf's Family” and “My Zombie Lover.” In “Micro Minds,” a scientist (Troy Donahue) plays God and is struck down by enlarged, evil amoebae for his hubris. In “A New Woman,” Charles Dickens' *A Christmas Carol* is redone, Grand Guignol-style, as a yuppie corporate business woman (Linda Thorson) is visited by rotting corpses who urge her to repent her selfish and heartless ways. In “Hostile Takeover” by Jonathan Valin, an inside trader is in league with Satan to make a profit until he realizes that his soul was a commodity he should not have bargained with.

Similarly informative about human nature was the impressive “Glim-Glim,” in which frightened humans mistake the intent of a benevolent alien and then murder him in cold blood. In the process, this act of violence destroys the human race because the fanciful-looking alien (a green hybrid of Gumby and a tentacled cucumber) was attempting to save the planet from a plague. Typical of *Monsters* good-hearted but two-dimensional moral viewpoint, the only human being who knew better was a child, a little girl to be precise. In an interesting stance for an “adult” horror show, the viewpoint of a child was usually quite important in *Monsters*, and also championed in “The Gift,” “Mr. Swlabr,” and “The Family Man.”

Terror TV's old friend from *The Twilight Zone* days, cosmic justice through supernatural or

otherworldly means, was also an important facet of *Monsters*' moral standpoint. A racist, drug-dealing, spoiled-rotten American playboy met his comeuppance in a Mexican prison in "Cellmates." A murderous dancer who hoped to further her career was haunted by the disembodied tap-dancing limbs of her murdered ex-partner in "Taps." A criminal hoping to have his sins removed instead found himself becoming a sin receptacle for others in "Sin-Sop." The view was always "an eye-for-an-eye." The sinners would be punished one way or another, and on *Monsters* the punishment *always* fit the crime.

Where *Monsters* truly failed to inspire was in two major categories. The first category, sadly, was a problem shared by *Tales from the Darkside*, a problem specifically with women and their role in a modern society. For whatever reason, the creative personnel seemed to have had it in for females on this show. This bizarre agenda resulted in many unfortunate episodes, and at least two that were genuinely offensive. The first of these disasters was "Household Gods," by Edythe Swensen, no less. In it, a tough-as-nails career woman (Deborah Van Valkenburgh) believes she can stay home, raise a baby, *and* have a career from her home office. The Household God, in league with her husband, is unhappy with this arrangement and makes the woman's life a living hell until she surrenders. Finally, the woman must remember her place and give up her career aspirations. Once this is done, domestic bliss is restored and we get a "happy ending." In one half-hour, "Household Gods" asserted a number of really offensive notions. The first was that "expectations are wrong for a woman" ... and that's a direct quote! In other words, the wife/mother should never have expected to have a career in the first place. She should have been satisfied to stay at home baking cookies and raising children. Importantly, the husband was never expected to stay home and take care of little ones. He was off-the-hook, though he was just as much to blame for the pregnancy, one assumes. Instead, it was just accepted without argument, without debate of any kind that *he* would still go out and do what he loved: pursue a lucrative career.

The second offensive thread pushed in "Household Gods" is that *genetically* it is a woman's destiny to stay home to bake and attend to the laundry. Even if, God forbid, this were true from a biological standpoint, whatever became of the notion that as thinking human beings we can all aspire to be more than what a grouping of cells dictates? We all live to exceed what nature hands us, do we not?

"Household Gods" might have been an interesting little social commentary had it been about a man who stays home and becomes a skilled domestic. Then, at least, the episode could have made the relevant point that anyone (male or female) who works from the home eventually becomes a slave to the "household" gods of laundry, cooking, etcetera. Then the episode would have been about occupational hazards, not a woman's so-called appropriate destiny. After all, would it not be nice if we all had the luxury of keeping one spouse at home while the other one works and provides for the family, the very arrangement which "Household Gods" lauds as natural and wonderful? Regardless, "Household Gods" displays a 1950s attitude towards woman and issues of the home. Had the mother prevailed in the climax, the installment might have played as satire, but the conclusion of the tale finds the heroine reduced to a life of serial knitting while her husband heads off victoriously to the office ... having achieved his goal, a stay at home wife with no life or aspirations of her own. Yuck.

A retrograde view of women is also evident in "Mr. Swlabr." In this comedic adventure, a meek little boy (Robert Oliveri) is dominated by his evil mother and sister, Barbie, until a hungry, sentient reptile comes to his rescue. This episode of *Monsters* portrays all women as overweight, chronic overeaters. The two women in the show literally eat through the whole episode, ordering the boy to bring them



drinks, pickles, ice cream, candy bars, and so on. The girls are also unfailingly mean, mean, mean. As in *Tales from the Darkside*, women seem to be viewed in *Monsters* as an impediment to male happiness, and in “Mr. Swlabr,” the little boy lives in a fantasy world of dinosaurs with “no girls and no Mom.” This is considered healthy? At the end of the show, the “bad” women are put in their places by *Mr. Swlabr* (a man, of course) and reduced to serving the boy’s playtime whims (making train sounds and noises to accompany his childish play). The message implicit in this story (as in “Household Gods”) is that the natural order of life is for women to serve men. Oh yes, social order was restored, and women’s issues suffered the consequences.

*Monsters*’ second big problem was that it relied heavily on broad humor and cartoon characters. In the ludicrous “Murray’s Monster,” a smarmy psychologist conjures up a monstrous ape in hypnosis (from the subconscious of a whiny patient) and then sends it to kill his wife. The monster will emerge from the patient’s subconscious when the psychologist’s wife explains to him what’s for dinner ... a tiresome meal repeated every night. Not only does “Murray’s Monster” view women as walking, talking restrictions on happiness (if the psychologist didn’t like dinner, why didn’t *he* fix it for a change?), it is comic, exaggerated, overdone, overacted, and unfunny. It is so dumb that it generates disbelief. How could any person in his or her right mind produce this trash? “The Demons,” about occult tomfoolery, “Small Blessing,” about a monstrous baby, “Their Divided Self,” about feuding Siamese twins, and “Parents from Space” are all similarly insipid one-line jokes told laboriously over thirty minutes with nary a degree of subtlety or wit. Not scary *and* not funny.

To leave it at that, however, would be unfair. *Monsters* was at its best when it stayed simple and just tried to present a straight-forward, grade B-horror movie with an interesting monster as a villain. “The Hole,” by Haskell Barkin, Gerry Conway, and Wayne Berwick is a perfect example of modest goals accomplished with exceptional panache. It is a terrifying little novella about three soldiers in the Vietnam war who find themselves in a Viet Cong tunnel complex with no apparent exit. The tunnels are not only endless ... they are alive! The bodies of the dead are soon lurching out of the clay to avenge all the blood spilled during this useless war. The claustrophobic setting, some slow-motion photography, a serious attitude, a little social commentary about the futility of war and the universal human fear of being buried alive in a subterranean hell all make “The Hole” an unforgettable and chilling half-hour. It accomplishes everything it sets out to do and does not feel the need to be “funny” or “meaningful.”

“Holly’s House” is another example of a serious story told simply and effectively. It’s kind of a *Child’s Play* on the cheap with a murderous animatronic TV star going crazy to save its own floundering show. The episode is set in an interesting world (behind the scenes of a child’s TV series), and it has some fun characters. The woman who controls the doll, for instance, is the only one who believes that Holly is alive and seeking vengeance for the impending cancellation of the *Pee Wee’s Playhouse*-style show. Since she controls the doll, however, everybody assumes that it is she who is killing people off and making the doll act strangely. Even more fun, the antagonist, Holly, is a real “star” monster, all right, a petulant, bitchy little thing who likes people and ratings to go her way ... no matter what.

“The Match Game” with Tori Spelling and Ashley Laurence, “Fool’s Gold” with Jeff Conaway and Mary Cadorette, “Rain Dance” with Kent McCord and Teri Copley, and “Sleeping Dragon” with Beth Toussaint and Russell Johnson likewise fulfill the basics of your average low-budget horror film: a small group of diverse and likable characters face down an incredible monster (a walking corpse in

“The Match Game,” a hairy troll hoarding his treasure in “Fool’s Gold,” a grinning but malevolent Indian statue come to life in “Rain Dance,” and an intelligent dinosaur on the prowl in “Sleeping Dragon”) in interesting settings (a haunted house, an underground construction site, a draught-ridden southwestern desert, a laboratory). Recognizable casts, fun monsters, simple stories and interesting but limited locales equaled thrills and chills aplenty. That may sound like a simple equation at face value, but when *Monsters* did not try to outthink itself or be “better” than the stories it showcased, this second Laurel anthology emerged as a satisfying show. Today, “B” monster movies like *Night of the Blood Beast* (1958) or *Laserblast* (1978) are not made anymore. The charm of these low-budget pictures has been lost to a high degree because Hollywood is now making them as “A” budget pictures with excellent digital effects and big stars. *Monsters* is a cheap but easily digestible horror mix which successfully evokes the same feeling as these rough diamonds from earlier film eras. It has some real horror jewels amidst the weaker tales, if one has the patience to watch it consistently (and to overlook the budgetary restrictions.) For those who are willing to actually embrace the limitations in acting, sets, and effects, there is a lot to love here.

## CAST AND CREDITS

*Credits: Series Special Effects and Makeup Consultant: Dick Smith. Executive Producer: Richard Rubinstein. Series Created by: Mitchell Galin and Richard Rubinstein. Directors of Photography (various episodes): Tony Cutrono, Irene Hartowicz, Michael Mayers, Oren Rudavsky, Steven Ross. Supervising Producer: Jan Saunders. Producer: Bill Siegler. Associate Producer: Robin Grey. Postproduction Supervisor: Greg Schorer. Editors (various episodes): Terry Blythe, Charley Coleman, Sherman Overton, David Pentacost, Christopher Roth. Casting Director (various episodes): Leonard Finger, Jean Scoccimarro. Production Designer: Don Day. Music composed by (various episodes): Brian Eddolls, Irwin Fisch, Ciro Hurtado, Daniel J. Licht, Gary Lionelli, John Massari, Walter Raim, Joe Taylor. Production Manager: Tony To. First Assistant Director (various episodes): Joe Derrig, Michael Grossman. Second Assistant Director: Chris Bongirne. Unit Manager: Lorie Zerweck. Production Auditor: Robin Ginsberg. Production Secretary: Gia Civerolo. Casting Assistant: Marion Wright. Script Supervisors (various episodes): Lou Ann Quast, Annie Welles. First Assistant Camera: Michael Cardone. Second Assistant Camera: Steve Cunningham. Still Photographer: Melissa Cohen. Art Director: Dan Frey. Set Decorator: Claire Bowin. On-Set Dresser: Ginnie Durden. Assistant Set Decorator: Michelle Marini. Lead Man: Kevin Bebout. Property Master: David Solomon. Assistant Props: Peter Devaney. Construction Supervisor: Ray Dorn. Construction Associate: Marie Hind. Monster created by (various episodes): Greg Cannom, Chiodo Brothers Productions, Steve Johnson, Michael Barnett Productions, Ken Walker, Tom Woodruff Jr. and Alec Gillis. Special Mechanical Effects: John Bisson, Kevin Haney, Kevin McCarthy. Special Effects Makeup: John Dods, Paul C. Reilly. Special Effects Props: Hank Liebskinde. Costume Designer: Fiona. Costumer: Lila Berkheim. Makeup/Hair: Nancy Cassett. Sound Mixer: Robert Anderson Jr. Boom Operator: Andy Adams. Gaffer: Ron Sill. Best Boy Electric: Mark Vargas. Electrician: Ron Cragg. Key Grip: Michael Listorti. Dolly Grip: Gary Molyneux. Grip: Neal Sheridan. Second Assistant Director: James Beaton III. Production Assistant: Anita Fox, Brenda White. Artist: Joey Melore. Assistant Editors: Mark Aboller, David Gordon. Production Executive: Diane Vilagi. Creative Coordinator: Gwynne Press. Production Controller: Ginger McGuine. Assistant to Mr. Rubinstein: Rosane McGarron. Assistant to Mr. Galin: Linda Housworth. Story Assistant: Beth Schroeder. Postproduction Assistant: Robert Valenzi. Publicist: Jeff Mackler. Camera Lenses: Panavision. Color: Foto-Kem. Postproduction Sound: Tundra Productions, Inc. Rerecorded at: Quality Sound. Filmed at: The Hollywood Stage. Opening Music: Donald Rubinstein. Opening Music Supervisor: Robert Harari. Co-producer: Erica Fox. Creative*

*Consultant: Tom Allen. Executive in Charge of Production: Mitchell Galin.* This series is dedicated to the memory of Tom Allen. A Laurel Production, in association with Tribune Entertainment Company.

## EPISODE GUIDE

### • *First Season (1988–1989)*

**1. “The Feverman”** Written by Neal Stevens; Directed by Michael Gornick; airdate: October 22, 1988; *Guest Cast:* John C. Vennema (Timothy Mason); David McCallum (The Feverman/Mr. Boyle); Patrick Garner (Dr. James Burke); Abby Lewis (Crone); Michelle Gornick (Girl); Katie Dierlam (The Fever).

A desperate father, accompanied by his skeptical family physician, brings his sick daughter to a faith healer called the Feverman. Down in his basement, the Feverman engages in mortal combat with the girl’s infection: a blubbery, tumorous, fleshy monster/disease.

**2. “Holly’s House”** Written by David Loucka and Jon Connolly; From a story by Ted Gershuny; Directed by Ted Gershuny; airdate: October 29, 1988; *Guest Cast:* Marilyn Jones (Catherine/Voice of Holly); Perry Long (Lenny/Mike the Mailman); Pamela Dean Kerny (Alice/Bird); Neil Smith (Director); Michael Anderson (Holly).

Things start to go wrong on the set of *Holly’s House*, a popular children’s TV series in its fourth season, when the animatronic lead character exhibits disturbing signs of independent behavior. Worse, Holly starts to become a very demanding star, and even begins to murder those co-stars who threaten to disturb the smooth production of the series.

**3. “New York Honey”** Written by Harvey Jacobs; Directed by Jerry C. Smith; airdate: November 5, 1988; *Guest Cast:* Lewis J. Stadlen (Jay Blake); MacIntyre Dixon (Dr. Homer Gimmerman); Andrea Thompson (Desiree); Elaine Bromka (Mrs. Blake).

A New York man and his wife are bothered by the loud music of their upstairs neighbor, so the husband goes upstairs to silence it. He finds that his neighbor is a beekeeper producing delicious honey and creating a giant insect queen.

**4. “The Vampire Hunter”** Written by Edithe Swensen; Directed by Michael Gornick; airdate: November 12, 1988; *Guest Cast:* John Bolger (Charles Poole); Page Hannah (Mara Warren); Robert Lansing (Ernest Chariot); Jack Koenig (Jack Avery); Sylvia Short (Mrs. Haggerty).

Miss Warren seeks the help of renowned vampire hunter Ernest Chariot when she claims her brother Gerlad has joined the legion of the undead. Chariot is due for an extended vacation, and is less than trustful of Miss Warren’s story ... factors which lead his apprentice, young Jack, to take the case himself and put himself in mortal jeopardy.

**5. “My Zombie Lover”** Written by David Misch; Story by Bill Burnett and David Misch; Directed by David Misch; airdate: November 19, 1988; *Guest Cast:* Tempestt Bledsoe (Dottie Lamesh); Steve Harper (Paul Nichols); Ed Wheeler (Mr. Lamesh); Marcella Lowery (Marge Lamesh); Eugene Byrd (Brad).

A college student returns home to visit her family on the “night of the dead,” the one evening of the

year when the zombies climb out of their tombs to eat the living. While her family is out killing zombies, young Dottie is called on by Paul Nichols, a former classmate, now zombie, who wants to ask her out on a date.

**6. “Where Is the Rest of Me?”** Written and directed by Dick Benner; airdate: November 26, 1988; *Guest Cast:* Meat Loaf (Doctor Killgood); Franco Harris (Joe); Drew Eliot (J.J.); Black-Eyed Susan (Regina Wells); Frank Tarsia (Adam).

A doctor who serves as the state’s executioner in a South American country brings a group of ex-patients together for the opportunity to participate in a profitable enterprise. He shows them Adam, a dead revolutionary who has unwillingly donated body parts to all of them over the years thanks to a special serum which keeps him “fresh.” When Adam is exposed to a big helping of the serum, however, he awakens with a strong need to reclaim the pieces of his body which have been stolen.

**7. “The Legacy”** Written by John Sutherland; From a story by Robert Bloch; Directed by Jeff Wolf; airdate: December 3, 1988; *Guest Cast:* David Brisbin (Dale); Lara Harris (Debbie Kerzen); Mary Ann Gibson (Stella Montgomery); Kevin Jeffries (Apparitions).

A struggling writer believes he has found the Hollywood retreat of a legendary film star, Fulton Pierce. Dale uncovers the great star’s makeup kit in a closet and becomes obsessed with learning the secrets of the great actor’s onscreen transformations into famous monsters like Quasimodo, Mr. Hyde, the Phantom of the Opera, and Dracula.

**8. “Sleeping Dragon”** Written by Michael Reaves; Directed by Mark Rezyka; airdate: December 10, 1988; *Guest Cast:* Kin Shriner (Merrick); Russell Johnson (The Professor); Beth Toussaint (Lisa); Wayne Toth (Monster).

On a dig outside of Reno, a 65 million-year-old rock capsule is discovered and transported to a local university for study. An eager scientist, a skeptical professor, and his beautiful daughter pierce the prehistoric artifact with a laser drill and unleash a murderous, sentient dinosaur from ages past.

**9. “Pool Sharks”** Written and directed by Alan Kingsberg; airdate: December 17, 1988; *Guest Cast:* Tom Mason (Gabe); Irving Metzman (Undertaker); Rebecca Downs (Natasha); Page Johnson (Cappy).

A pool shark whose brother disappeared in a pool hall some months ago challenges the beautiful woman he believes responsible to a game of pool. Her name is Natasha, and she is much more than a hustler ... she is a vampire.

**10. “Pillow Talk”** Written by David Odell; Directed by Carl Stine; airdate: December 24, 1988; *Guest Cast:* John Diehl (Miles Magnus); Mary Woronov (Vicki); Ruth De Sosa (Barbara).

Miles Magnus, author of *Curse of the Mutilator* and other well-received horror tomes, brings a woman home after a date and tells her that she is the only woman in the world who can fill the void inside of him. What he means, unfortunately, is that his one night stand is the main course for his carnivorous, fang-laden bed ... a monstrous, age-old creature which he refers to as “the Master.”

**11. “Rouse Him Not”** Written by Michael Parry; From a story by Manly Wade Wellman; Directed by Mark Shostrom; airdate: December 31, 1988; *Guest Cast:* Alex Cord (John Dunston); Laraine

Newman (Linda McGuire); Terrance Evans (Mr. Rittson).

A journalist researching local supernatural legends meets with New York painter Linda McGuire, who has just moved into the little cottage once owned by a witch named Maraby. In the basement of the cottage dwells a monstrous beast, Maraby's "familiar," who can only be stopped by the silver sword of John Dunston.

**12. "Fools' Gold"** Written by Michael Reaves; Directed by Greg Cannom; airdate: January 21, 1989; *Guest Cast:* Jeff Conaway (Phil); Mary Cadorette (Sherry); T.J. Castronovo (Joe); Debbie Carrington.

After a miner is murdered in an underground cavern, his supervisor and two miners discover his corpse ... burned to a crisp and grasping a gold coin. The curious threesome explore inside the dark cave, and finds a treasure chest zealously guarded by a hairy beast with boiling blood—a modern-day troll!

**13. "Glim-Glim"** Written by F. Paul Wilson; Directed by Peter Michael Sloan; airdate: February 4, 1989; *Guest Cast:* Mark Hofmaier (Dad); Brian Fitzpatrick (Carl); Jenna von Oy (Amy).

Near Christmas, an alien crashlands on Earth and accidentally kills off the inhabitants of a small town with a deadly plague. Immune to the disease, a high school teacher, his little girl, and a tough guy seek refuge in the town library while the alien, a benevolent creature, tries desperately to save the entire planet from suffering the same grim fate as the townspeople.

**14. "Parents from Space"** Written by Peg Haller and Bob Schneider; Directed by Jerry Smith; airdate: February 11, 1989; *Guest Cast:* Frank Gorshin (Ward Ellers); Peggy Cass (June Ellers); Mary Griffin (Cindy); Ann Hilary (Mrs. Rogers).

A case worker visits the home of the Ellers to be certain that young foster child Cindy is not being abused. In fact, Cindy's parents are evil, monstrous people who get what they deserve when they are possessed and eventually replaced by two kindhearted, loving ratlike alien grandparents.

**15. "The Mother Instinct"** Written by D. Emerson Smith; Directed by Bette Gordon; airdate: February 18, 1989; *Guest Cast:* Elizabeth Franz, Ginn Carter, Tom Gilroy.

A young man discovers the truth about an old woman's very tasty melons. Their secret has to do with carnivorous, vicious worms, who live in the soil which grows the melons....

**16. "Their Divided Self"** Written by Michael Bishop; Based on the short story *Collaborating* by Michael Bishop; Directed by Frank De Palma; airdate: February 25, 1989; *Guest Cast:* David L. Lander (James Self); Keith McKechnie (Robert Self); Karen Haber (Miss Ellergee Kaiser); Edye Byrde (Velma); Rich Hall (Dr. Blackman).

Dr. Blackman visits the home of bickering Siamese twins James and Robert Self in hopes that he can help them better communicate. A young woman wants to marry the famous comic duo, but she has issues: should the twins be separated, or can they learn to really "talk" to one another?

**17. "Taps"** Written by Larry Charles and David Misch; Directed by David Misch; airdate: March 4, 1989; *Guest Cast:* Mary Jo Keenan (Susie St. Claire); Neal Jones (Gary Gregory); Dan Frazer (Sam).

A dance duo on Broadway hits a rough spot when Susie wants to leave the show for an acting career in Hollywood. Her partner, Gary, is the only person who can release her from her Broadway contract, so Susie resorts to murder and dismemberment to jump-start her movie career.

**18. “The Match Game”** Written by David Chaskin; From a story by Christopher Orville; Directed by Michael Brandon; airdate: April 15, 1989; *Guest Cast:* Ashley Laurence (Jody); Byron Thames (Paul); Sasha Jensen (Matthew); Tori Spelling (Bev); Tom Woodruff, Jr. (Herbert).

Four teenagers sneak into the old Waverly mansion in the thick of the night to play a scary game, a game wherein they each tell a portion of one ghost story for the duration of a lit match’s life. Little do they know that their story, about a monstrous, hateful creature living in Becker’s Pond, is all too true.

**19. “Rain Dance”** Written by Michael Kimball; Directed by Richard Friedman; airdate: April 22, 1989; *Guest Cast:* Kent McCord (Tom Solo); Teri Copley (Vanessa Solo); Betty Carvahlo (Indian Woman); Antonio Hoyo (Death God).

Tom Solo, a treasure hunter, acquires artifacts from a Southwestern Indian tribe which vanished to dust tens of thousands of years ago, including a statue of the “Death God.” His discoveries are not so exciting to his wife, Vanessa, who is tired of desert life, but the Death God puts an end to her misery.

**20. “Cocoon”** Written by Edythe Swensen; Directed by John Gray; airdate: April 29, 1989; *Guest Cast:* Billy Drago, Kim Johnson Ulrich, Silvana Gallardo.

A decades-old murder case cannot be solved without the assistance of a psychic. The key to opening up the past involves a woman who has lost her memory.

**21. “All in a Day’s Work”** Written by Jule Selbo; Story by Michael Galloglach; Directed by Allen Coulter; airdate: May 6, 1989; *Guest Cast:* Adrienne Barbeau, James Morrison, Eddie Velez, Brandon Bluhm.

A witch is approached by a desperate man for a very odd purpose. He wants his evil “double” dealt with, and he wants her to call up a demonic force to help him do it.

**22. “Satan in the Suburbs”** Written by Jule Selbo; From a story by Barbara Boater; Directed by Warner Stok; airdate: May 13, 1989; *Guest Cast:* Christopher Noth, Deborah Strang, Danny Gerard.

A middle-class suburban woman is tempted by a demon.

**23. “Mannekins of Horror”** Written by Josef Anderson; Based on a story by Robert Bloch; Directed by Ernest Farino; airdate: May 20, 1989; *Guest Cast:* Glynis Barber (Dr. Jarvis); William Prince (Dr. Collin); Brian Brophy (Dr. Starr).

To escape his grim surroundings, a surgeon being rehabilitated in a state hospital resorts to sculpting anatomically perfect clay figures. In fact, he plans to transfer his soul into one of his clay men, and to kill his tormentor, Dr. Starr.

**24. “La Strega”** Written by Michael McDowell; From a story by Richard A. Russo; Directed by Lizzie Borden; airdate: May 27, 1989; *Guest Cast:* Linda Blair (Leah/La Strega); Rob Morrow, Maria Tucci.

A beautiful witch, La Strega, turns the tables on a young man seeking revenge for the death of his mother ten years to the day after La Strega cursed her. The witch captures the young man and makes a deal: he will stay with her for two weeks to determine exactly what kind of witch she is, and then, if he still thinks her evil, kill her.

• *Second Season (1989–1990)*

**25. “The Face”** Written by Neal Stevens; Directed by Allen Coulter; airdate: October 1, 1989; *Guest Cast:* Imogene Coca, Gary Roberts, Gregory Grove.

A criminal runs afoul of a nasty old lady with an even nastier occult power. Justice is served when the criminal is bitten and forced to face a change in his lifestyle.

**26. “Portrait of the Artist”** Written by Keith Mano; Directed by Jerry Smith; airdate: October 8, 1989; *Guest Cast:* Darren McGavin (Hubert Pockock); Beeson Carroll (Roger Darcy); Laurie Kennedy (Lucille Clay); Cheryl Russell (Voice of Penny Darcy).

Roger and Lucille, two concerned people, stop in a remote art gallery because they fear that several missing people, including Roger’s daughter, Penny, have become part of the objets d’arts on display. The gallery custodian, Hubert Pockock, is an especially twitchy character who may know more than he is letting on.

**27. “A Bond of Silk”** Written by Michael Kimball; Directed by Ernest Farino; airdate: October 15, 1989; *Guest Cast:* Lydia Cornell, Marc McClure.

A newlywed couple discovers horror when the bride and groom are confronted with a giant spider in their honeymoon suite.

**28. “Rerun”** Written by Peg Haller and Bob Schneider; Directed by John Auerbach; airdate: October 22, 1989; *Guest Cast:* Mark Nassar, Kaye Ballard, Mitchell Whitefield, Rachel Jones.

A college student understands the old axiom “be careful what you wish for” when the deceased star of his favorite television show is resurrected ... and moves into his dorm room with him.

**29. “Love Hurts”** Written by Edythe Swensen; Directed by Manny Coto; airdate: October 29, 1989; *Guest Cast:* Olivia Brown, Henry Brown, Ren Woods, Valentina Quinn.

Voodoo is the order of the day when a lustful southern femme fatale attempts to seduce the husband of another woman.

**30. “The Farmer’s Daughter”** Written by Kenneth Pressman; From a story by Kenneth Pressman and Bob Balaban; Directed by Michael Warren Powell; airdate: November 5, 1989; *Guest Cast:* Soupy Sales (Howard Philbin); Stephanie Phillips (Lucy); Bobo Lewis (Ma); George Hall (Pa).

A traveling Bible salesman survives a car accident in a deadly storm and seeks shelter in the small home of a farmer and his wife. The farmers have a (seemingly) beautiful daughter named Lucy, and the salesman is warned not to touch her, or even go close to her, unless his intentions are honorable.

**31. “Jar”** Written by Bob Schneider and Peg Haller; From a story by Steven W. Davis; Directed by

Bette Gordon; airdate: November 12, 1989; *Guest Cast*: Fritz Weaver (Mr. Hallet); Richard Edson (Jack Bateman); Gina Gershon (Ann); Ed Kovens (George Stamos).

In the remote swampland, a personal investigator named Bateman stops at an out-of-the-way motel to question its owner about several recent disappearances. At the motel, Bateman runs into the beautiful Ann, wife of the terminally ill mobster George Stamos, and discovers that the motel owner is growing some hideous and dangerous creatures in pickle jars.

**32. “The Demons”** Written by Martin Olson and Robert Scheckley; Story by Robert Scheckley; Directed by Scott Alexander; airdate: November 19, 1989; *Guest Cast*: Richard Moll (Arcturus Gamete); Jeff Silverman (Arthur Gamet); Karen Hensel (June); Lou Mustillo (City Morgue Delivery Man); Eddie Deezen (The Demon).

June is unhappy with her husband Arthur because he is obsessed with his career in insurance to the exclusion of everything else, even sex. Meanwhile, in an alternate dimension, a creature mistakenly captures Arthur, believing him to be a demon.

**33. “Reaper”** Written by Josef Anderson; From a story by Robert Bloch; Directed by Jean Patenaude; airdate: November 26, 1989; *Guest Cast*: Barbara Billingsley (Sheila Brewer); George D. Wallace (Robert Ross); Curt Lowens (Dr. Morton); Catherine Blue (Gina); Mary Dean (Miss Endicott).

A terminally-ill old man is moved to a new room at the Beechwood Nursing Home, but he is visited there at midnight by Dr. Morton ... the Grim Reaper. The Grim Reaper make a deal with the senior citizen: three additional lives in exchange for his own continued existence.

**34. “The Mandrake Root”** Written by Harvey Jacobs; Directed by Brian Thomas Jones; airdate: December 10, 1989; *Guest Cast*: Melba Moore (Angela Lyle); Frankie Faison (Jack Lyle); Byron Minns (Demon); Claudia Silver (Real Estate Lady).

Angela Lyle discovers a demon root in her recently deceased grandmother’s basement. The mandrake root grows into a gorgon man who thirsts not only for love, but for human blood.

**35. “Half as Old as Time”** Written by Thomas Babe; From a story by Taenha Goodrich and Jake West; Directed by Christopher Todd; airdate: December 17, 1989; *Guest Cast*: Leif Garrett, Valerie Wildman, Nick Ramus.

An aging archaeologist plans to exploit his latest Native American discovery in an attempt to become immortal.

**36. “Museum Hearts”** Written by Ted Gershuny; From a story by David P. Beavers; Directed by Ted Gershuny; airdate: January 7, 1990; *Guest Cast*: Patrick Breen (Danny); Louise Roberts (Edwina); Sarah Trigger (Cheryl); Pamela Dean Kenny (Cerridwen).

A womanizer named Danny gets caught two-timing with the beautiful Cheryl when his lover Edwina shows up at a museum after hours. In an attempt to escape the closed museum, the unlikely trio breaks into a crate marked fragile which contains the corpse of a most unusual bog woman, a Druid priestess named Cerridwen.



**37. “Habitat”** Written by David Morrell; Directed by Bette Gordon; airdate: January 14, 1990; *Guest Cast*: Lili Taylor (Jamie Neal); Frederick Wessler (Alien’s voice).

A young woman signs a contract to spend nine months alone inside a strange, computerized habitat. She goes inside facing loneliness, silence, and insanity ... unaware that she is now an alien’s favorite pet.

**38. “Bed and Boar”** Written by David Odell; Directed by Sara Driver; airdate: January 21 1990; *Guest Cast*: Jodie Markell, Charles Kay-Hune, Sara Driver.

Another obnoxious traveling salesman ends up peddling his wares in the wrong place at the wrong time.

**39. “Mr. Swlabr”** Written by Jule Selbo; From a story by Steven L. Nelson; Directed by Warner Shook; airdate: January 28, 1990; *Guest Cast*: Kate McGregor-Stewart (Mom); Robert Oliveri (Roy); Danielle Ferland (Barbie); Rockets Redglare (Swlabr).

A put-upon young boy opens a box of Wonder Pops cereal and incubates the little toy prize inside—a creature called a “swlabr.” The dinosaurlike being is a clumsy, talkative, hungry thing with a heart of gold and an inclination to help the boy improve his domestic situation.

**40. “Perchance to Dream”** Written by Michael Reaves; Directed by Paul Boyington; airdate: February 4, 1990; *Guest Cast*: Raphael Sbarge (Alex); Sarah G. Buxton (Megan); Kenneth Danziger (Kyle).

A college student is terrorized by parapsychical phenomena after a blow to the head and two weeks of sleep deprivation. Now, Alex’s own psychic energy is being discharged into reality instead of subconscious dreams, and if Alex wants the hell to end, he must face his doppelganger, his dream self.

**41. “One Wolf’s Family”** Written by Paul Dini; Directed by Alex Zamm; airdate: February 11, 1990; *Guest Cast*: Anne Meara (Gretta Lupasian); Jerry Stiller (Victor Lupasian); Robert Clohessy (Stanley Offall); Amy Stiller (Anya Lupasian); Karen Shallo (Agnes Peabody).

A family of immigrants (and werewolves) from the Old Country contemplate the marriage of their Americanized daughter, Anya. Unfortunately, her husband-to-be is a were-hyena, and old crossracial prejudices are revived.

**42. “The Offering”** Written by Dan Simmons; Directed by Ernest Farino; airdate: February 18, 1990; *Guest Cast*: Orson Bean, Robert Krantz, Bob Larkin, Karen Hittelman (Radiologist).

A man suffering from a concussion is haunted by a night creature—an evil monster which inserts black, sluglike creatures into human beings. Tumors, it turns out, are not just a part of cancer, but alien eggs multiplying inside the bodies of sick people.

**43. “Far Below”** Written by Michael McDowell; From a short story by Robert Barbour Johnson; Directed by Debra Hill; airdate: February 25, 1990; *Guest Cast*: Barry Nelson (Dr. Vernon Rathmore); John Scott Clough (Alex Critz); Calvin Levels (Luchenski); Rick Goldman (Watson); Jan Munroe (Vic Jansen).

In the bowels of the New York City subway, workers are being murdered by an unseen predator. Meanwhile, an obnoxious auditor meets with Dr. Rathmore, the man who oversees the tunnels, and learns the truth about the beasts far below.

**44. “Micro Minds”** Written by D. Emerson Smith; Directed by Anthony Santa Croce; airdate: March 4, 1990; *Guest Cast:* Troy Donahue (Dr. Thomas Becker); Belle Avery (Paula); David Permenter (Gok).

A gifted student and her ambitious professor believe they have discovered a transmission from extraterrestrial life, but in fact they have found a race of intelligent protozoa living inside a water tank. They make contact with one strain of intelligent bacteria called Gok, and Professor Becker cannot resist the temptation to play God.

**45. “Refugee”** Written by Haskell Barkin; Directed by Scott Vickery; airdate: May 13, 1990; *Guest Cast:* Peter White (Paul); Judy Geeson (Anna Soretzka); S.A. Griffin (Demon); Philip Abbot (Oliver Ferguson).

A secret agent is recruited to rescue a Russian physicist as the Cold War ends and his retirement looms. The unusual mission finds the agent defending the beautiful Soviet woman not from the KGB, but from the devil.

**46. “The Gift”** Written by D. Emerson Smith; Directed by Jeffrey Wolf; airdate: May 20, 1990; *Guest Cast:* Abe Vigoda (Dolan); John Bolger (Kirby); Brad Greenquist (Jeffrey McGregor); Zach Overton (William); Carlos Laucho (The Beast).

Two thugs kidnap the son of a wealthy businessman and take him to a remote winter cabin. Their efforts are hindered by a strange, hairy beast with telepathic and shape-shifting abilities who is on a centuries-long mission to destroy evil.

**47. “The Bargain”** Written and directed by Tom Noonan; airdate: May 27, 1990; *Guest Cast:* Kim Greist (Sarah); Sharon Schlarth (Mandy); Kevin Geer (Joe).

A woman has the courage to follow her heart, but she sacrifices her good judgment. She trades her appearance and bookstore for a beautiful body and a video store, unaware that the object of her affection loves the plain Jane book reader in her old body.

**48. “The Family Man”** Written by Allen Coulter and Gordon Rayfield; Directed by Michael Warren Powell; airdate: June 3, 1990; *Guest Cast:* Michael O’Gorman (Warren); Annie Corley (Angie); Calvin Armitage (Neil); Kelli Rabke (Terry).

When Angie invites her new boyfriend Warren over to the house for a backyard barbecue, her sensitive young son sees the interloper as a monster thanks to his dead father’s glasses. Now the boy must convince his family not to welcome the monster hiding in the body of a man.

• *Third Season (1990–1991)*

**49. “Stressed Environment”** Written by Neal Stevens; Directed by Jeffrey Wolf; airdate: September 30, 1990; *Guest Cast:* Carol Lynley (Dr. Liz Porter); Victor Raider-Wexler (Keith); Scott J. Weir (Bobby); Kathleen McCall (Gina).

In Dr. Porter's pesticide laboratory, the pests are growing in size and getting increasingly smart: jamming pesticide nozzles, stealing traps, and even killing human personnel. The monsters responsible in this case are highly evolved rats who have developed weaponry as well as intelligence ... and now they're waging war on the human race.

**50. "Murray's Monster"** Written and directed by Scott Alexander; airdate: October 7, 1990; *Guest Cast:* Joe Flaherty (Dr. Sherwin Chester); Miriam Flynn (Debbie Waters); Teresa Ganzel (Lou Anne Chester); Marvin Kaplan (Murray Van Pelt).

A man named Murray Van Pelt, who is sick of always being told what to do, seeks help from a selfish, unhappily married psychologist. The therapist suggest hypnosis, and then learns that Murray has the ability to express his anger by transforming into a ferocious ape monster.

**51. "Bug House"** Written by Josef Anderson; From a story by Lisa Tuttle; Directed by Ken Meyers; airdate: October 14, 1990; *Guest Cast:* Karen Sillas (Ellen); Robert Kerbeck (Peter); Juliette Kurth (Mae).

When her car breaks down in a rain storm, Ellen stops by at the home of her pregnant sister, Mae. Ellen begins to have an affair with Peter, Mae's lover, but she soon learns that Peter is a dangerous man who has a strange affinity with insects.

**52. "Cellmates"** Written by David Odell; Directed by Steve Tolkin; airdate: October 21, 1990; *Guest Cast:* Maxwell Caulfield (Timothy Danforth); Ferdinand Mayne (Old Prisoner); David Sage (Lawyer); Geno Silva (Guard).

An American tourist is incarcerated in a "bad" cell in a Mexican prison after running down a Mexican boy, assaulting a police officer, and dealing drugs. The American, son of a rich businessman, learns from his lawyer that demons of the "Old Religion" prowl the town by night, and he soon learns from a cellmate that the legend has basis in fact.

**53. "Outpost"** Written by Michael Reaves; Directed by T.K. Hudson; airdate: October 28, 1990; *Guest Cast:* Juliet Mills (Cara Raymond); Tony Fields (Sebastian/Andros).

A rigid outpost inspector still mourning the death of her husband stops at a remote planetary base to determine why the projected ore shipments are not being met by Sebastian, a bioengineered life form wholly owned by the Hephaestus Company. Sebastian is worried because he hears voices on the red-hued planet ... voices like whispers which seem to emanate from a bizarre crystalline entity.

**54. "The Hole"** Written by Haskell Barkin; From a story by Wayne Berwick and Gerry Conway; Directed by David Severeid; airdate: November 4, 1990; *Guest Cast:* Ahmad Rashad (Sgt. Kenner); Antone Pagan (Corporal Torres); Glenn Kubota, Mitchell McCormack.

Three U.S. soldiers in the Vietnam War descend into one of the Viet Cong's subterranean labyrinths. They find it deserted, but for one mutilated VC soldier who warns that something evil is dwelling in the tunnel walls.

**55. "Small Blessing"** Written by Peg Haller and Bob Schneider; Directed by Roger Nygard; airdate: November 11, 1990; *Guest Cast:* Julie Brown (Wendy Prozac); David Spade (Teddy); Peggy Rea

(Babs); Kevin Nealon (Luis).

A harried couple must contend with their monstrous, 36-lb. infant, Eric. When the monster baby goes missing, the parents go out in search of their “special” child and end up fighting the town psycho.

**56. “Shave and a Haircut, Two Bites”** Written by Dan Simmons; Directed by John Strydik; airdate: November 18, 1990; *Guest Cast:* Wil Wheaton (Kevin); Matt LeBlanc (Tommy); John O’Leary (Innis); Al Mancini (D’Onofrio).

A young man tries to convince his friend that the small barber shop next door is run by vampires. In an effort to prove his unusual theory, Kevin leads Tommy on a break-in which results in some unusual answers ... and quite a bit of terror.

**57. “The Young and the Headless”** Written by Peg Haller and Rob Schneider; From a story by W.C. Morrow; Directed by Tom Abrams; airdate: November 25, 1990; *Guest Cast:* Karen Valentine (Vicky); George Riehnolt (Billy “Hunk” Hunkel); John Schiappa (Edward).

While carrying on with a wheelchair-bound neurosurgeon, Vicky is reunited with her ex-husband Hunk, who disappeared in the jungle seven years earlier. Meanwhile, Vicky and Edward work to complete the experimental microchip replacement of the cerebellum.

**58. “The Waiting Game”** Written by John Fox; Directed by Bruno Spandello; airdate: December 2, 1990; *Guest Cast:* Doug McKeon, Stephen Burleigh, Carrington Garland, Leo Garcia.

Years after World War III, the remnants of humanity huddle in a nuclear fallout shelter, fearing that some kind of new life exists outside ... a life inimical to human existence.

**59. “Sin-Sop”** Written by Douglas Wallace; From a story by Alan Boguse; Directed by P.J. Pesce; airdate: December 9, 1990; *Guest Cast:* Richard Borg (Brother Roy); Christine Dunford (Laura Daniel); Charlotte Booker (Helen); Christopher Shaw; Robert Valenzi.

Brother Roy specializes in removing the sins of others, but journalist Laura Daniel thinks he’s a fraud and thus attempts to expose him. She discovers that he is using a device called a “Sin-o-meter” as well as a “sin extractor,” a person who can absorb evil.

**60. “A New Woman”** Written by Edythe Swensen; Directed by Brian Thomas Jones; airdate: December 16, 1990; *Guest Cast:* Linda Thorson (Jessica); Tom McDermott (Thomas Beckman); Dan Butler (David Beckman); Mason Adams (The Doctor).

Greedy Jessica wants her dying lover Thomas Beckman to cut his own son, David, out of his will and tear down the Morrissey Homeless Shelter. To her surprise, a visit from some ghoulish Christmas spirits lead her down a path to reformation.

**61. “Malcolm”** Written and directed by Tom Noonan; airdate: December 23, 1990; *Guest Cast:* Ed Lauter (“Mickey” Malcolm); Carole Shelley (Lorna); Farley Granger (Doctor); Byll Potts, Donald Smyth (Surgical Orderlies).

Worn down by job and responsibilities, ex-clarinet player Malcolm arrives home one night to find his wife Lorna playing old records and longing for the romantic past. After a few toots on his clarinet,

Malcom doubles over in pain, and a strange growth protrudes from his stomach.

**62. “Household Gods”** Written by Edithe Swensen; Directed by Michael Warren Powell; airdate: December 30, 1990; *Guest Cast*: Deborah Van Valkenburgh (Deborah Levitt); Priscilla Shanks (Laura D’Angelo); Jeff Ware (Brad Levitt); “Little Mike” Anderson (Household God); Lynn Frazen-Cohen (Edna); Lindsay Schwartz (Sarah).

A tough-as-nails career woman is guided to a life of domesticity by a strange, troll-like monster and overly helpful neighbor. When her infant daughter, Sarah, is stolen by the household god who demands her worship, the woman must reassess her priorities.

**63. “The Space-Eaters”** Written and directed by Robert T. Megginson; From a story by Frank Belknap Long; airdate: January 6, 1991; *Guest Cast*: Richard Clarke (Howard); Mart Hulswit (Frederick); Richard M. Hughes (Henry Wells).

On a secluded island, a physician and his chess partner hold out during an extended and unexpected storm that has masked the arrival of a devilish extraterrestrial. A villager shows up at the physician’s house, complaining that his brain has been eaten by an alien ... and the large hole in his skull seems to confirm his bizarre story.

**64. “The Waiting Room”** Written by Neal Stevens; Directed by Philip Alderton; airdate: January 13, 1991; *Guest Cast*: John Saxon (Benjamin O’Connell); Lisa Waltz (Catherine); Christian LeBlanc (John O’Connell); Denise Gentile (Ghost Woman).

A lonely widower named Benjamin escorts his son and new wife Catherine to an isolated honeymoon hideaway where he spent his honeymoon with his now-deceased wife. In the middle of the night, Benjamin’s son John disappears after an encounter with a spectral seductress once visited by Benjamin.

**65. “Leavings”** Written by Gahan Wilson; From a story by Gahan Wilson; Directed by John Tillinger; airdate: January 20, 1991; *Guest Cast*: Clifton James (Inspector); John Christopher Jones (Parkers); Tony Shalhoub (Sgt. Mancini); Ken Costegan (Old Man); John Robert Bloom (S. Partz).

Two policeman return to the station with a strange old homeless man who is missing both of his arms. The strange thing is ... he had both of his limbs just the day before, and the police inspector hardly seems curious about it.

**66. “Desirable Alien”** written by Edithe Swensen; Directed by Bette Gordon; airdate: January 27, 1991; *Guest Cast*: Tony Spiridakis (Hercules Valvilodis); Wendy A. Makkena (Maggie Price); Luiz Guzman (Luis); Rick Aviles (Mr. Vega); Deborah Harry (Dr. Moss).

At a Greek restaurant in the U.S., an immigrant prepares to take the oath of citizenship when a beautiful U.S. immigration official holds up the process on a technicality: a physical is required. The gentleman in question, Hercules Valvilodis, is reluctant to have a physical because he has an unusual “birth defect”—he is a highly desirable satyr.

**67. “A Face for Radio”** Written and directed by Bruce Fierstein; airdate: February 3, 1991; *Guest Cast*: Morton Downey Jr. (Raymond Bright); Laura Branigan (Amanda Jones Smith); Lori Krebs

(Cassandra); Phillip Stewart (Big Benjamin Grady); Julie Wilson (Debbie); Rick Wessler (Voice).

Raymond Bright, late night radio talk show host in Buffalo, hounds his first guest, Cassandra, about her prediction that he will soon be confined in a painful box. His next guest is a woman named Amanda Jones Smith, who insists that she has brought an alien inside a black box—an alien which can eat “evil” minds.

**68. “Werewolf of Hollywood”** Written by Ron Goulart; Directed by Tom Whelan; airdate: February 10, 1991; *Guest Cast:* Richard Belzer (Buzz Hunkel); David Leary (Billy Mariner); Geraldine Leer (Vickie Rohmer); Shelley Berman (Mr. Leo Tandovsky).

Buzz Hunkel, Silver Pen Award Winner, is teamed with a young film student, Vickie Rohmer, to rewrite the screenplay for a new film entitled *Werewolf of Hollywood*. As it turns out, the screenplay (from a producer’s outline) is based on fact, and a nasty werewolf, really the studio’s chief executive, is terrorizing the studio’s back lot.

**69. “Talk Nice to Me”** Written by Paul Dini; Directed by Ernest Farino; airdate: February 17, 1991; *Guest Cast:* Ed Marinaro (Martin); Teri Ann Linn (Linda); David Spielberg (Tom Reardon); Tina Louise (The Voice).

A playboy listens to his answering machine messages to discover that an unknown woman is playing close attention to his busy romantic life. The caller starts to become dangerous as she continues to telephone, breaks into his apartment, and then, finally, makes her first appearance in the flesh.

**70. “Hostile Takeover”** Written by Jonathan Valin; Directed by Randall Moldave; airdate: February 24, 1991; *Guest Cast:* Dennis Christopher (Lawrence Bower); Tracey Walter (Ed the Janitor); William Lanteau (Tom Hart); Pam Grier (Matilde).

A ruthless businessman revels in the appropriation and cannibalization of failing businesses. He is a trader on inside information from Matilde, an occult shop-owner, who has plans for a blood ritual and a “hostile takeover” of another sort.

**71. “The Maker”** Written by Michael Kimball; Directed by William Wesley; airdate: August 18, 1991; *Guest Cast:* Eddie Bracken (J.J. Fredericks); Philip Anglim (Mack); Carla Herd (Delores).

In the cold of winter, a man seeks refuge in an abandoned hotel, where he meets J.J. Fredericks, a bum who calls the place home. Strangely, J.J. seems to possess a magic ability: he can create things out of thought, including money and ... monsters.

**72. “The Moving Finger”** Written by Haskell Barkin; From a story by Stephen King; Directed by Ken Meyers; airdate: April 26, 1992; *Guest Cast:* Tom Noonan, Alice Playten, Sharon Cornell.

An apparently disembodied human finger shows up in a man’s sink and just won’t go away.

## *Tales from the Crypt* (1989–1997)

### CRITICAL RECEPTION

“*Tales from the Crypt* is ... free to do whatever it wants as it pursues the traditional horror themes of murder, madness and mayhem. And it does so with frequently splendid gusto. It’s all here: the distorted camera angles ... the music that serves as a cue for imminent juicy scenes; the blood-and-gore slashing sequences.... In short, anything goes, but not without the saving grace of ... humor ... *Tales from the Crypt* goes about its macabre business with a certain Grand Guignol relish that gives the series a style that horror fans will find irresistible.”—John J. O’Connor, *The New York Times*: “Sex, Violence and a Leavening Grace,” June 12, 1990.

“The series is generally quite good, but is definitely not for the squeamish, with graphic scenes of extreme gore and violence.”—William Anchors, *Epilog* #8: “*Tales from the Crypt*,” July 1991, page 65.

### FORMAT

As a typical episode of HBO’s *Tales from the Crypt* begins, viewers find themselves on a macabre probe through some very frightening real estate. A black iron gate squeaks open, and the camera speeds up a dark hill as lightning flashes in the night. In P.O.V. perspective, the camera ascends the staircase of a rotting mansion (in fact an elaborate miniature built by Boss Films). Once inside, the camera speeds through the first floor of the castle and then takes a turn (behind a rotating bookcase) down a spiral staircase into a crypt. There, a coffin opens of its own accord and out pops the ghoulish Crypt Keeper, a rotting but nonetheless highly animated corpse.

Then, the Crypt Keeper (your host for this unusual anthology) introduces the night’s story. In these framing sequences, the Crypt Keeper is usually garbed in an outfit and surrounded by props which relate to the tale at hand. In a story about physical perfection, for instance, the Crypt Keeper is seen in exercise gear with guest director Arnold Schwarzenegger (“The Switch”). In a story about art, he is seen as a painter (“Easel Kill Ya”) with easel and palette. In a story called “Fitting Punishment,” about a boy who loves sports, he is seen playing basketball (with skulls substituting for the ball!), and so forth. During the Crypt Keeper’s memorable opening and closing remarks, he usually makes some horrible (though delightful) puns. In the aforementioned sports-related saga, “Fitting Punishment,” he pontificates on *fear* leaders and notes that he likes basketball because those who cannot score “just pass ... away.” Alliteration is also highlighted in these wraparound segments and phrases like “a putrefying promoter of pop” (to describe a character in “For Cryin’ Out Loud”) seem to roll off the Crypt Keeper’s (decaying) tongue.

Just about all the stories told on *Tales from the Crypt* come from E.C. Comics titles such as *Vault of Horror*, *Shocking SuspenStories*, *Crime SuspenStories*, *Two-Fisted Tales*, and, of course, *Tales from the Crypt*. In many cases, as in the latter day James Bond pictures, a title has been appropriated, but the specifics of the story are reinvented or updated to fit with the needs of the creators and the times.

A high-profile, premium cable program, the long-lived *Tales from the Crypt* may be the best-cast,

best-directed anthology of latter day, modern TV terror. Each episode features at least one “big” star and many shows feature celebrity directors such as Michael J. Fox, Tom Hanks, and Walter Hill. Because of its origins as a cable series, *Tales from the Crypt* can and does, like *The Hitchhiker* before it, feature nudity, sexual situations, and large quantities of really disgusting, but beautifully engineered, gore. In the syndicated versions of this half-hour show (which have also aired on the Fox Network in prime time), these “R” rated sequences have been re-edited to be less graphic or eliminated all together.

## HISTORY

From 1950 to 1954, Bill Gaines (1922–1992) fought the good fight at E.C. Comics. (The initials stood first for Educational Comics, then for Entertaining Comics.) Beginning in 1950, Gaines published a series of horror comic books including *Tales from the Crypt*, *Vault of Horror*, and *Haunt of Fear*. These graphic comics were frequently gory, but were also highly didactic in their approach to genre storytelling. The “bad” characters were always punished (usually in a gruesome, ironic, and supernatural way), even if the law was unable to catch them for their crimes. In other words, the comics preached that there was such a thing as objective justice, and that, karmically speaking, the bad would get theirs in the end. In many ways, the stories were fairy tales, perfectly in line with horrific “classics” like *Hansel and Gretel*.

Better than the moral bent of the stories, these horror comic books were frequently witty and smart, and the artwork was nothing short of brilliant. So influential to the youngsters who read these comics (usually over the objections of both parents) were *Tales from the Crypt* and its E.C. comrades that today many of Hollywood’s (and horror’s) greatest talents credit the material for inspiring them and their own memorable visions. John Carpenter, Stephen King, George Romero, and Ray Bradbury (who actually wrote issues of E.C. Comics) all trumpet Gaines’ horror empire as the thematic and stylistic ground zero for a new generation of horror writers, directors, and fans. Still, this history section opened with the notion that Gaines fought a “good fight,” and it is one battle in particular which many remember today, a battle which goes beyond even Gaines’ sizable creative contributions to the genre.

In 1954, the horror genre faced one of its greatest and most daunting challenges. There would be others to be sure (from the likes of Jerry Falwell, Morton Downey Jr., Pat Robertson, Bob Dole, and others), but this one was perhaps the most potentially damaging of all because of the repressive era in which it was launched. A New York psychiatrist with two decades of experience named Frederic Wertham publicly declared that comic books were the source of juvenile delinquency in America because they poisoned the minds of innocents with violence, sex, crime, and gore. In particular, he wrote that exposure to comic books was:

definitely and completely harmful and was a distinct influencing factor in every single delinquent or disturbed child we studied.<sup>1</sup>

Wertham also found comics to be sexually “aggressive” and demeaning to women. Despite (or more likely because of) these fatuous claims, Wertham became a highly influential voice in what was a conformist and repressive decade. His book was titled *Seduction of the Innocent: The Influence of Comic Books on Today’s Youth*, and among other things, Wertham contended that Batman and Robin were homosexuals (an early version of Jerry Falwell’s similar objection to a purple-clad character on the children’s program *Teletubbies*) and that Wonder Woman was a “lesbian sadist.”<sup>2</sup> These



ridiculous, utterly baseless charges would have been funny had they not sparked a very serious debate and ultimately a form of censorship. In 1954, a U.S. Senate subcommittee to investigate juvenile delinquency was formed and chaired by Senator Estes Kefauver. Comic books, and horror and crime comic books in particular, were basically declared “public enemy number 1.” As a result, comic books were burned and destroyed, and it became impossible for Gaines to continue publishing *Tales from the Crypt* and the other genre titles he had popularized.

Bill Gaines testified at the Kefauver hearings and declared his belief that comic books were not harmful to young minds. Despite his valiant efforts to block censorship, he failed to stem the national trend towards repression. A new (and restrictive) comic book code basically outlawed horror as a genre and cut the guts out of *Tales from the Crypt* and its companion mags. On September 14, 1954, the battle was lost and *Tales from the Crypt* ceased publication. Though Gaines continued to publish books (*MAD Magazine* for instance), a great source of interesting horror was destroyed.

Yet Gaines was to be vindicated. The horror comics he published inspired a generation of filmmakers and writers, and more than forty years after his memorable clash with Senator Kefauver, Gaines’ *Tales from the Crypt* rose like a phoenix from the ashes—this time as a high-budget, high-profile TV series on HBO.

Although the title had been briefly revived in the ’70s for an Amicus anthology starring Ralph Richardson as the Crypt Keeper as well as Joan Collins and Peter Cushing, it would be the late ’80s–early-’90s cable half-hour which would make the greatest cultural impact on modern America. Behind the revival of the once-maligned comic book series were a series of directors, writers, and producers who had made names for themselves in horror and fantasy genres themselves. Walter Hill, the director of the controversial *The Warriors* and producer of *Alien*, *Aliens*, *Alien*<sup>3</sup> and *Alien Resurrection*, teamed with Richard Donner (who had directed episodes of the original *The Twilight Zone* as well as the 1976 occult hit *The Omen*), Robert Zemeckis (a former writer on *Kolchak: The Night Stalker*), David Giler, and Hollywood super producer Joel Silver to spearhead the revival, which was first envisioned as a film. Remembering the lukewarm receipts of *The Twilight Zone Movie* (1983) and *Creepshow 2* (1987), the deal soon transformed into a TV proposal, though cable backing was deemed a necessity because it would permit a freer hand in adapting *Tales from the Crypt*’s wild horror stories. This new production team then purchased from Gaines the rights to over 500 stories from the E.C. Comics vault ... and the series was off and running.

In a field crowded by the Laurel anthologies (*Tales from the Darkside* and *Monsters*), and USA Network anthologies (*The Ray Bradbury Theater*, *The Hitchhiker*, *Alfred Hitchcock Presents*), some wondered how *Tales from the Crypt* would be able to distinguish itself from the rest of the pack. As producer Teitler told *Cinefantastique*, the production team felt fully justified in their efforts:

All the others sprang from *Tales from the Crypt*, which had a tremendous influence on so many writers and directors and makeup artists working in the field today. We’re going back to the source. The comics themselves were so unique—violent, perverse, funny, densely packed, suspenseful. They were like the Brothers Grimm—at the same time horrible and humorous, but morality tales that hold up amazingly well today.<sup>3</sup>

Unfortunately, there was another side of this issue too. Producer Joel Silver was quoted in *Rolling Stone* as having less-than-artistic motivations for supporting a TV series based on Bill Gaines’ classic

magazine stories:

I don't want to do *Tales from the Crypt* for two or three or six shows, because that doesn't mean shit to me. I need to do eighty, because that's where I'm going to make my money.<sup>4</sup>

What Silver clearly meant in this blunt remark was that if *Tales from the Crypt* ran for enough episodes (usually between 80 and 100) to be stripped daily in syndication, he and his prominent partners would be millionaires many times over. In fairness to Joel Silver, this is the hope of *all* TV producers, not just him or those involved with *Tales from the Crypt*. Money is the name of the game in a world where art and commerce co-exist uneasily. Still, this remark (and others) generated a great deal of animosity and controversy in some industry and horror circles. Some long-time E.C. fans worried that the new HBO show was merely trying to cash in on the popularity of *Tales from the Crypt*. Genre favorites like John Carpenter openly accused the series of being a business venture made by people who had no love of horror ... only a love of money. In response, Carpenter countered with his own Showtime bid for a horror anthology, *John Carpenter's Body Bags* (1993), but it failed to go to series. About the difference between *Tales from the Crypt* and his project, Carpenter had this to say:

One of the things I like about this particular project [*Body Bags*] is that it's made for and by people who love horror, not somebody like Joel Silver who couldn't give a shit. This is going to be a little different. It's a little stronger, a little more oddball than *Tales from the Crypt*.<sup>5</sup>

Despite controversies, *Tales from the Crypt* quickly became a popular series. Budgeted at \$850,000 per half hour,<sup>6</sup> the series opened with a 90-minute special in July of 1989. This special showing featured three episodes: "The Man Who Was Death," "All Through the House" (which had already been translated to film in the 1972 Amicus production) and "Dig That Cat ... He's Real Gone." The ratings for the premiere episode(s) were very high and HBO gave the green light for a full season's commitment of episodes. Although the horror, explicit sex, and violence of *Tales from the Crypt* no doubt contributed to the success of the show in the early days, there was another factor that is impossible to ignore: the host. The Crypt Keeper, designed by Kevin Yagher (of *Nightmare on Elm Street III: Dream Warriors* and *Child's Play*), was a delightfully devilish bugger with plenty of personality and life in him. Interestingly, the Crypt Keeper also represented a new generation of anthology host. Horror had already seen dead celebrities resurrected (*Alfred Hitchcock Presents*), and even a ghoul (*Freddy's Nightmares*) assume hosting duties, but this was the first time that an animatronic special effects creation would tackle the important job. Given (shrieking) voice by John Kassir, the Crypt Keeper was a special effect marvel who eventually become a cult hero in and of himself. The Crypt Keeper was actually a complex puppet operated by Kevin Yagher's production team. Yagher told *Fangoria* precisely how the Crypt Keeper's strings were pulled:

We use a puppeteer with a hand inside the head and inside the arm. Four other puppeteers work the facial expressions of the head [which all function with the aid of small servo motors]. The smile is the only thing that is cable controlled, and that's only because it has so much latex to pull back.<sup>7</sup>

While Yagher was pulling the Crypt Keeper's strings, *Tales from the Crypt* was pulling down some major film talent to showcase its horror drama. Because Walter Hill, Richard Donner, Joel Silver, and David Giler had so many prominent connections to the silver screen, major talent practically lined up to appear on the show. Just as becoming a villain on *Batman* (1966-69) had become the "in" thing for

stars decades earlier, a guest spot on *Tales from the Crypt* was the ultimate in “cool” once the series established itself. Lea Thompson (“Only Sin Deep”), William Hickey (“The Switch”), Teri Hatcher (“The Thing from the Grave”), Demi Moore (“Dead Right”), Lance Henriksen (“Cutting Cards,” “Yellow”), Kim Delaney (“The Sacrifice”), Patricia Arquette (“Four-Sided Triangle”), Jon Lovitz (“Top Billing”), Beau Bridges and Tony Goldwyn (“Abra Cadaver”), Kyle MacLachlan (“Carrion Death”), Whoopi Goldberg (“Dead Wait”), Malcolm McDowell and Michael Berryman (“The Reluctant Vampire”), John Glover (“Undertaking Pallor”), Kirk Douglas (“Yellow”), Dylan McDermott (“This’ll Kill Ya”), David Warner and Zelda Rubinstein (“The New Arrival”), Timothy Dalton (“Werewolf Concerto”), Mimi Rogers (“Beauty Rest”), Brad Pitt (“King of the Road”), Bill Paxton and Brad Dourif (“People Who Live in Brass Hearsets”), Steve Buscemi (“Forever Ambergris”), Billy Zane and Martin Sheen (“Well-Cooked Hams”), and Brooke Shields (“Came the Dawn”) were just a few of the stars who top-lined the series during its first six years on the air.

Behind the camera, horror veterans such as Tobe Hooper (*The Texas Chainsaw Massacre* [1974]), William Friedkin (*The Exorcist* [1973], *The Guardian* [1990]), Mary Lambert (*Pet Sematary* [1989]), Todd Holland (*Child’s Play* [1988], *Fright Night* [1985]), Fred Dekker (*The Monster Squad*), Jack Sholder (*Alone in the Dark* [1981], *The Hidden* [1987]), Peter Medak (*Space: 1999*, *The Changeling* [1981], *Species 2* [1998]), Chris Walas (*The Fly II* [1990]), Stephen Hopkins (*A Nightmare on Elm Street 5: The Dream Child* [1989], *Predator 2* [1990], *The Ghost and the Darkness* [1996]) and Russell Mulcahy (*Highlander* [1986]) directed episodes alongside Walter Hill, Robert Zemeckis, Richard Donner, Howard Deutch, Kevin Yagher, Robert Longo, Manny Coto, Gary Fleder, and others. Even actors-turned-directors like Kyle MacLachlan, Arnold Schwarzenegger, Tom Hanks, and Michael J. Fox took turns lensing *Tales from the Crypt* stories.

As word of mouth grew stronger on *Tales from the Crypt*, so did the viewing numbers. The seasons flew by and the show even picked up a Cable ACE award. The best news (at least for the money-minded Silver) came during the show’s fifth season when the Fox Network bought exclusive showing rights of *Tales from the Crypt* (minus some of the sex and gore.) Amazingly, the show was aired in prime time on Tuesday nights ... even though these episodes were essentially one-to-four year-old reruns first seen on HBO. At the same time, the Crypt Keeper became more and more of a pop celebrity and even showed up on the *Tonight Show* razzing host Jay Leno. At this juncture, *Tales from the Crypt*, again like *Batman* before it, was not just a TV show, but a pop culture/merchandising bonanza. A *Tales from the Crypt Keeper* cartoon aired on ABC on Saturday mornings with an animated (and green) version of the Crypt Keeper telling watered-down horror stories to the kiddies.

In 1995, a *Tales from the Crypt* motion picture, *Demon Knight*, was released and it managed to outgross such horror heavyweights as Wes Craven’s *A Vampire in Brooklyn*, Spike Lee’s *Tales from the Hood*, John Carpenter’s double bill of *In the Mouth of Madness* and *Village of the Damned*, Dean Koontz’s *Hideaway*, Clive Barker’s *Lord of Illusions*, and sequels such as *Candyman II: Farewell to the Flesh* and *Halloween 6: The Curse of Michael Myers*. The picture was directed by Ernest Dickerson and starred William Sadler and Billy Zane. Not only were the box office receipts respectable, but the film generated some unexpectedly positive reviews as well.

Those bean-counters watching the bottom line were thrilled with the progression of the series. As Toper Taylor, the senior vice president for *Tales from the Crypt* licensing enthused in 1994 as all of the action was heating up (on Fox, on HBO, and on ABC):

I’ve been in the franchise business for ten years but I’ve never seen a phenomenon like this.

Usually networks are extremely territorial about their programming. The fact that you have three different networks promoting the same character, I think, speaks to the fact that the Crypt Keeper has transcended being a puppet and has become an actor. He's become the skeletal Groucho Marx who goes from *A Night at the Opera* to *What's My Line*.<sup>8</sup>

During its seventh and final season on the air (as production on the second *Tales from the Crypt* feature film, *Bordello of Blood*, was commencing), *Tales from the Crypt*, the TV series, found it difficult to remain innovative and simultaneously faithful to Gaines' vision, so it pulled the same neat trick that had been used to lend the last season of *One Step Beyond* an air of newness back in 1961: it changed venues. The production company for *Tales* pulled up stakes and moved to England. Beginning in November of 1995, the series was lensed at Ealing Studios in West London. Each half-hour episode had a rigorous schedule: four days of preproduction, four days of shooting, and four days of postproduction.<sup>9</sup> As for the move abroad, producer Gil Adler explained the motivation behind the switch:

Making our base in London basically gave us two things, firstly, a whole new range of actors and actresses.... Secondly, we can take advantage of locations we couldn't even build in Los Angeles.... I'm talking about places like Dover Castle, Knebworth and the East End. It all adds up to a totally new look for us.... And no, it isn't cheaper to shoot here. It's costing us a little bit more actually.<sup>10</sup>

On the acting front, the move to Great Britain resulted in guest appearances by Gayle Hunnicutt (*The Legend of Hell House* [1973]), Ewan McGregor (*Trainspotting* [1996], *Star Wars Episode 1: The Phantom Menace* [1999]), Eddie Izzard (*The Avengers* [1998]), Richard Johnson (*The Haunting* [1960]), Francesca Annis (*Dune* [1984]), Paul Freeman (*Raiders of the Lost Ark* [1981]) and guest directors such as Freddie Francis, who had directed the Amicus *Tales from the Crypt* feature in 1972, and even star Bob Hoskins.

Despite the attempts to keep the material fresh, 1996 was to be the last year of "Cryptmania." The *Tales from the Crypt Keeper* cartoon was canceled after two seasons, the second *Crypt* film, *Bordello of Blood*, was ripped apart by critics and ignored by audiences, the *Crypt Keeper* merchandise line ended up in clearance baskets at Toys "R" Us stores, and the HBO series was canceled. Plans for a spin-off, *Two-Fisted Tales*, crumbled, and no third *Tales from the Crypt* motion picture has yet been forthcoming. *Tales from the Crypt* is rarely rerun in prime time as of this writing (except by the Sci-Fi Channel) because it is not an attractive option to sponsors during the family hour. When it is run by local stations, it is almost always late at night, after midnight, to accommodate the high levels of sex and violence. Like the *Batman* phenomenon of the '60s, *Tales from the Crypt* burned bright for a while but faded fast.

Several *Tales from the Crypt* VHS collections have been released by HBO, each one featuring three stories.

### CRITICAL COMMENTARY

This critic is on the fence about HBO's *Tales from the Crypt*. On the one hand, the production values are nothing less than stupendous, the direction is always solid, and the guest star performances are good and memorable. The mischievous Crypt Keeper is also a real delight to watch, a great (and

funny) anthology host whose shtick is frequently more amusing than the story he introduces. On the negative side of the equation, the series is one of the most depressing in recent memory because it rarely bothers to feature likable or even identifiable human characters. *Tales from the Crypt*'s bread and butter, the story told again and again, is the old one about the "bad guy" who finally gets his comeuppance. Although this concept was also the primary material of the comic book, television and comics are vastly different art forms. Where a reader may come back again and again, month after month, to re-experience the same kind of rush generated by this story of "justice," the repetition is more noticeable and troubling on weekly TV (which already has a built-in repetition factor called "reruns").

For example: In "All Through the House," an adulterous woman (Mary Ellen Trainor) who murdered her husband is in turn murdered by a lunatic dressed as Santa Claus. In "Death of Some Salesman," a scamming con-artist is done in by a ghoulish scam. In "Top Billing" a pompous actor kills his competitor only to be killed himself when it is revealed that the role he has auditioned for is that of a dead man. In "Split Second," another adulteress gets hers after she causes a young innocent to be blinded. In "Creep Course," a professor who had hoped to sacrifice a virginal student to a vicious Mummy is instead sacrificed himself. In "Collection Completed," an old man who murdered and stuffed his wife's beloved pets himself ends up being stuffed. In "The Trap," an abusive husband who fakes his own death for financial gain ends up in the electric chair thanks to the machinations of his poor wife and timid brother. And on and on and on. Basically, there were just far too many examples of "just desserts" on *Tales from the Crypt*, and so tedium rather than thrills are frequently generated.

Some people may advance the idea that this preponderance of "just dessert" revenge stories is an attempt on the part of the series creators to be faithful to the source material, but such an assertion is hardly waterproof. The comic book *Tales from the Crypt* always edged artfully around issues of sex but was *never* explicit in depicting nudity or couplings. The HBO TV series, unfettered by network restrictions, threw restraint to the wind. There were explicit nude scenes and simulated sex in "Lover Come Hack to Me," "Loved to Death," "Split Second," "Death of Some Salesman," and others. Now there is absolutely nothing wrong with showing off a little female pulchritude or highlighting some arousing sex scenes, but faithful to Gaines' comic vision, *Tales from the Crypt* is most certainly not.

Situational logic is also frequently violated on this horror series, so as to lead up to the inevitably gory conclusion. In the aforementioned "Split Second," a jealous husband beats his wife's lover to within an inch of his life, permanently blinding the young fella. Defying logic, the injured man (Billy Wirth) is not rushed to the nearest hospital, and worse, the perpetrator (Brion James) is not arrested or even questioned by local police about the beating. Yes, these are loggers out in the forests of the Great Northwest, but there are laws and policemen out there too! At the beginning of the story, a local bar was established as a setting, so clearly there is some societal infrastructure nearby. Logically, the nasty husband would have been at least detained for a spell before returning to work scot free. Of course, if that had happened, the audience would not have the opportunity to see the "just desserts" conclusion in which the husband is cut up by a blind man wielding a chainsaw.

Similarly, "The Trap" (directed by Michael J. Fox) glosses conveniently over facts and logic to reach its ironic conclusion. This is the story of Lou Poloma (Bruce McGill), a man who decides to fake his death and collect the insurance money. He fakes his death scene and then leaves the country while his wife (Teri Garr) and his meek brother (Bruno Kirby), a coroner, arrange things for him. When his co-conspirators fail to show up with the money, Poloma returns to the States to challenge them. He has

had mild plastic surgery to change his features, so his wife and brother successfully claim that *he* is the man who killed Poloma months earlier. After a speedy trial, Poloma is sent to the electric chair for murdering “himself.” Though entertaining, this story fails to hold together. Why does Poloma not ask for DNA confirmation that he is who he says he is? A PCR (special DNA test) would do nicely here, thank you. Or, why not contact the plastic surgeon who performed the operation on his face, and ask him to testify? Sure, Poloma would go to jail for fraud, but that is a far preferable fate to death in the electric chair. And frankly, would not there be at least one person in the world (other than his wife and brother) who could still identify him as Lou Poloma, especially since his face change is minimal, to say the least? “The Trap” attempts to bypass this issue by making Poloma a loud-mouthed jerk who (conveniently) always says the wrong things at the wrong times, and by introducing his mother as a senile old woman who does not recognize her own son. This is weak plotting, pure and simple, an attempt to get to that “ironic” and “just” conclusion where the bad guy gets his.

“You, Murderer,” the much publicized *Tales from the Crypt* episode which utilizes *Forrest Gump* special effects technology and features the image of Humphrey Bogart, is another genuine waste of time. The production is so concerned with clever ways to show Bogart’s image (reflected in mirrors, elevators, windows, and whiskey flasks) that there is no real story to tell at all. It is all just an excuse for special effects triumph which today (five years later) do not hold up particularly well. That established, the Crypt Keeper sequence in this episode is genuinely hysterical. As a feather floats by, the ghoulish host (dressed as Gump) sits on a park bench and shares a box of “shockalates” with Alfred Hitchcock. “Scary is as scary does,” the Crypt Keeper intones, in a deadpan imitation of Tom Hanks’ legendary simpleton.

Among the most distasteful episodes of the series are “For Cryin’ Out Loud,” in which a screaming Sam Kinison plays a rock promoter’s very loud, very obnoxious conscience, and “Fitting Punishment,” wherein a likable young African American boy is murdered by his cruel uncle for no reason in particular. In these, and other stories, almost nothing of interest happens until the special effects gore denouement.

To its credit, *Tales from the Crypt* always looks terrific. Because of a significantly higher budget than the Laurel shows, there are none of the production limitations on sets, prosthetics, and music which so frequently turned the anthologies *Tales from the Darkside* and *Monsters* into two-man radio dramas which bordered on camp. The high-profile actors and directors on *Crypt* also managed to avoid the broad, hysterical overplaying and one-dimensional performances that were a hallmark of so many inferior *Monsters* episodes. *Tales from the Crypt* went to World War I (“Yellow”), the 1950s (“Dead Right”) and other settings and eras with verisimilitude and confidence.

Perhaps the best episodes of *Tales from the Crypt* are those which recall that the Gaines’ comics had value because they often taught lessons beyond the by-now rote concept of “an eye-for-an-eye” justice. “Cutting Cards,” directed by Walter Hill, is some kind of minor TV masterpiece. In this gripping tale, two compulsive gamblers (*Millennium*’s Lance Henriksen and Kevin Tighe) prove that they just don’t know when to stop competing. An escalating suspense ride which goes from cards to Russian Roulette to a horrifying game called “chop poker” (played with meat cleavers, of course) results in a delightful climactic image: two bull-headed men, unable yet to admit defeat, sit armless and legless in a mental hospital, still bickering over a game of checkers (they move pieces with their noses!). Tense, funny, and with a neat lesson about pride in mind, “Cutting Cards” is a horror hoot.

“The Switch,” directed by Arnold Schwarzenegger, is another winner which uses horror to make a

point. Old man, William Hickey, gives up his life's fortune to have a youthful body. After he has been rebuilt as an Adonis, he finds that the object of his love would rather have had his money. In fact, she has married the very rich man who now inhabits Hickey's old, aged body! The moral here is "the grass is always greener on the other side." One man has money, but wants beauty. The man with beauty, of course, wants money. Though a little bit over the top for some tastes, "The Switch" is a concept worthy of the original *Twilight Zone* and quite well handled by Schwarzenegger and *Tales from the Crypt*.

Perhaps the bottom line on this series is that *Tales from the Crypt* is slick and entertaining. The host is charming in his own wacky way, and there are far worse ways to spend a half-hour than with the likes of Kirk Douglas, John Lithgow, Demi Moore, Mimi Rogers, Kyle MacLachlan, Tim Curry (who gives a stunning three-part performance in "Death of Some Salesman"), and the like. For horror fans, the picture is even rosier. This series rarely, if ever, fails to deliver gory, bloody finales. And, in its own way, the show is stylish. "Deadline" is a kind of throwback to the *film noir*, "Undertaking Pallor" is seen entirely through the lens of a teenager's video camera, "You, Murderer" and parts of "Abra Cadaver" are told through subjective, point-of-view perspective, and "The Third Pig" is a twisted animated fairy tale. In truth, *Tales from the Crypt* episodes are good-looking mini-feature films ... what *Amazing Stories* tried to be, and failed. Looks aside, however, the series seems to lack the genuine caring heart of *Rod Serling's Night Gallery* and the low-budget, maniacal zeal of *The Evil Touch*, *Monsters*, and *Tales from the Darkside*, even as it slices and dices its way into the annals of the genre.

As for that Crypt Keeper, he's talented enough to merit a movie or two of his own ... maybe even a sitcom.

## CAST AND CREDITS

*Cast:* John Kassir (Voice of the Crypt Keeper).

*Credits: Casting:* Sharon Bialy, Vicki Huff, Doreen Lane, Gail Levin, Lauren Lloyd, Richard Pagano, Karen Rea. *Music (various episodes):* Peter Allen, Steve Bartek, Frank Becker, Peter Bernstein, Chris Boardman, Bruce Boughton, Stanley Clarke, Michael Columbier, Bill Conti, Michael Convertino, Ry Cooder, Cliff Eidelman, Jonathan Elias, Jay Ferguson, Brad Fiedel, Christopher Frank, Kevin Gilbert, Miles Goodman, Jan Hammer, James Horner, Vladimir Horunzhy, Scott Johnson, Michael Kamen, David Kitay, Sylvester Levay, David Mansfield, Donald Markowitz, Rick Marotta, Branford Marsalis, Brian May, Ira Newborn, David Newman, Julian Nott, Nicholas Pike, Pray for Rain, Joe Renzetti, J. Peter Robinson, Michael Rubini, Craig Safan, Merl Saunders, Alan Silvestri, Ulrich Sinn, Jay Uhler, Nathan Wang, Jimmy Webb, Walter Werzowa, Warren Zevon. *Director of Photography (various episodes):* Rick Bota, Richard Bowen, Rob Draper, Levie Isaaks, Shelly Johnson, Jeff Jur, John R. Leonetti, Tim Suhrestedt, Peter Stein, Jost Vacano, Jack Wallner. *Editors (various episodes):* Pasquale Buba, Carmel Davies, Tom Finan, Seth Flaum, Andrew London, Stephen Semel, Stanley Wohlberg. *Series Theme Composed by:* Danny Elfman. *Production Designer (various episodes):* Virginia Lee, Greg Melton, Lee Randolph, Steve Wolff. *Co-producers:* Jennie Lew Tugend, Barry Josephson. *Executive Producers:* Richard Donner, David Giler, Walter Hill, Joel Silver, Robert Zemeckis. *Producers:* Gilbert Adler, Richard Donner, Joel Silver, William Teitler. *As Originally Published by:* William M. Gaines. *Story Editor:* A.L. Katz. *First Assistant Director:* Pat Duffy. *Second Assistant Director:* Kristi "Kat" Timinski. *Associate Producers:* Marcus Keys, Connie Johnson. *Production*

*Coordinator: Dorothy Sidwell. Assistant Coordinator: Kevin J. Donnelly. Location Manager: Jean Henley. Production Accountant: Rob Labrecque. Script Supervisor: Brenda Weisman. Script Coordinator: Rochelle Shaposhnick. Assistant to Richard Donner: Alexander Collett. Assistant to Joel Silver: Kathy Barnett. Assistant to Jennie Lew Tugend: Mark Marshall. Assistant to Barry Josephson: Louise Weber. Set Runner: John Simon. Art Director: Phil Dagort. Costume Design: Nancy Fox. Set Decorator: Kate J. Sullivan. Set Designer: James Cott Plauche. Property Master: Christopher Amy. Makeup Artist: Donna Henderson. Hair Stylist: Russell Todd Smith. Special Effects Makeup: Mike Spatola. Make-up and Effects Designed by: Kevin Yagher. Makeup Effects Crew: Marc C. Yagher, David Stinnett, Ken Brilliant, Erik Schaper, Mike Elizalde, Shaun Smith. First Assistant Camera: Andy Graham. Still Photographer: Michael Paris. Sound Mixer: Joseph Geisinger. Boom Operator: Craig Woods. Special Effects: Tommy Bellissimo. Gaffer: Tim McGinnis. Key Grip: George Palmer. Construction Coordinator: Douglas A. Womack. Postproduction Supervisor: Robert Parigi. Assistant Editors: Troy Takaki, Anthony Adler. Supervising Sound Editors: Patrick M. Griffith. Dialogue Editor: Richard Dorwin. Rerecording Mixers: Gerry Lentz, Stanley Johnston. Opening Titles Designed by: Paula Silver Ltd. Titles and Optical: Laser-Pacific. Sound: The Sound Guys, Inc.*

*Crypt Keeper Designed by: Kevin Yagher Productions, Inc. Crypt Keeper Puppeteers: F. Charles Lutkus III, Patty Maloney, Anton P. Ruprecht, Van Snowden, Michael A. Trcic, N. Brock Winkless IV. Crypt Keeper Sequences Directed by: Kevin Yagher.*

*Opening Sequence by: Boss Film Studios. Producer: Richard Edlund. Director of Photography: Neil Krepela. Model Shop Supervisor: David M. Jones. Miniature Crew Chief: Leslie Ekker. Sculptor: Michael Hosch. Line Producer: Michael Van Himbergen. Optical Supervisor: Michael Sweeney.*

## EPISODE GUIDE

### • *First Season (1989)*

**1. “The Man Who Was Death”** Written by Robert Renau and Walter Hill; From *Tales from the Crypt* #17-2; Directed by Walter Hill; airdate June 10, 1989; *Guest Cast:* William Sadler (Niles Talbot); J.W. Smith (Charlie); Roy Brocksmith (Vick); David Wohl (Warden); Gerrit Graham (Theodore); Dani Minnick (Cynthia); Mimi Kennedy, Robert Winley (Jimmy); Tony Abatemarco, Mark Lowenthal, Edgar Small, Eve Brent. Raymond O’Conner, M. Jennifer Evans, Patti Yasutake, Julie Ann Lucas, Laura Albert.

Niles Talbot is a simple man who has worked hard and risen through the ranks to become the state’s top executioner. When the death penalty is repealed and the electric chair is left vacant, Talbot finds himself unemployed ... but old habits die hard.

**2. “All Through the House ... ”** Written by Fred Dekker; From *Vault of Horror*, #35–1; Directed by Robert Zemeckis; airdate: June 10, 1989; *Guest Cast:* Larry Drake (Santa Claus); Mary Ellen Trainor (Elizabeth Dulcie); Marshall Bell (Joseph Dulcie); Lindsey Whitney Barry (Carrie); Jean Eppler, George F. Wilbur (Stunts).

It’s Christmas Eve and a woman murders her husband with a fireplace poker and prepares to throw him down a well. Little does she know that a serial killer escaped from the looney bin is on the loose in the Pleasantville/Gaines area ... and he’s dressed like Santa Claus.



**3. “Dig That Cat ... He’s Real Gone”** Written by Terry Black; From *Haunt of Fear* #21-2; Directed by Terry Black; airdate: June 10, 1989; *Guest Cast*: Joe Pantoliano (Ulric); Robert Wuhl (Barker); Kathleen York (Cora); Gustav Vintas (Dr. Emil Manfred).

There’s an old myth that cats have nine lives. One man discovers that myth is true when he is operated on and given a cat’s gland which allows him to die and return to life again and again.

**4. “Only Sin Deep”** Written by Fred Dekker; From *Tales from the Crypt* #38-2; Directed by Howard Deutch; airdate: June 14, 1989; *Guest Cast*: Lea Thompson (Sylvia Vane); Britt Leach (Pawn Broker); Brett Cullen (Ronnie Price); Pamella D’Pella (Raven); G. Smokey Campbell (Pimp).

A beautiful but heartless street walker robs and then murders a pimp. When she goes to a pawn shop to sell his things, the voodoo-practicing pawn broker makes an unusual suggestion: he will pay her big money if she sells him her beauty.

**5. “Lover Come Hack to Me”** Written by Michael McDowell; From *Haunt of Fear*, #19-2; Directed by Tom Holland; airdate: June 21, 1989; *Guest Cast*: Amanda Plummer (Peggy); Stephen Shellen (Charles); Lisa Figus (Aunt Edith); Richard Eden (Allen).

Two newlyweds get caught in a storm on the way to their honeymoon and are forced to take refuge in a dark, abandoned mansion. The husband is really a gold-digger, and he discovers that his new wife has a very large appetite for love, as well as a hereditary desire to keep his love perfect for all eternity.

**6. “Collection Completed”** Written by A. Whitney Brown, Jr., Battle Davis; Randolph Davis; From *Vault of Horror*, #25-4; Directed by Mary Lambert; airdate: June 28, 1989; *Guest Cast*: M. Emmet Walsh (Jonas); Audra Lindley (Anita); Martin Garner (Roy); Bob Herron (Stunts).

Cranky old Jonas is not adjusting well to retirement: he is bored, and he hates the fact that his wife Anita shares her life with a variety of homeless pets. Jonas rebuffs Anita’s attempts at kindness, belittles her love of animals, and then takes up taxidermy ... and she responds in kind.

• *Second Season (1990)*

**7. “Dead Right”** Written by Andy Wolk; From *Shock Stories*, #6–1; Directed by Howard Deutch; airdate: April 21, 1990; *Guest Cast*: Demi Moore (Cathy Finch); Jeffrey Tambor (Charlie Marno); Natalija Nogulich (Madame Verona); Troy Evans (Al); Kate Hodge (Sally); Earl Boen (Mr. Clayton); Susan Lentini (Leanne); Joe Lerer (TV Reporter); Phyllis Hamlin (Reporter); Eric Popick (Manager); John Towey (Justice of the Peace); Raina Marvel (Young Woman); Darlene Hartwell (Ora Lee); Sandra Margot (Stripper #2).

A woman visits a fortune-teller who tells her she will lose her job and get a new one within 24 hours. When that prediction proves correct, Cathy returns to Madame Verona, who offers her a second prophecy: she will marry, her husband will inherit big money ... and he will die a violent death.

**8. “The Switch”** Written by Richard Tiggle and Michael Taav; From *Tales from the Crypt* #45-4; Directed by Arnold Schwarzenegger; airdate: April 21, 1990; *Guest Cast*: William Hickey (Carlton Webster); Rick Rossovich (Hans Dalton); Kelly Preston (Linda); Roy Brocksmith (Doctor Nostromo); Ian Abercrombie (Fulton); J. Patrick McNamara (Dr. Thorne); Renata Scott (Female Patient); Tish Smiley (Nurse); Christopher Lawford (Manager); Mark Pellegrino (Punk); Kendall McCarthy

(Doorman); Spiro Raza (Stunts); Bill Lucas (Stunt Punk); Ted Barba (Stunt Punk).

A rich old man is in love with a beautiful young girl who knows nothing of his wealth. When she rejects him because of his advanced years and appearance as an old man, he goes to extraordinary (and expensive) means to acquire a more youthful appearance ... all on a mistaken assumption.

**9. “Cutting Cards”** Written by Mae Woods and Walter Hill; From *Tales from the Crypt* #32-3; Directed by Walter Hill; airdate: April 21, 1990; *Guest Cast*: Lance Henriksen (Reno Crebis); Kevin Tighe (Sam Forney); Roy Brocksmith (Bartender); Diane Civita (Hostess); Alan Graf (Driver); Alisa Christensen (Blonde Woman); David Avadon (Dealer).

A legendary but stubborn gambler, Reno Crebis, challenges his old rival, the equally hardheaded Sam Forney, to a game of Russian roulette. The two men go out to a parking lot and take turns putting the gun to their heads and pulling the trigger.

**10. “’Til Death”** Written by Jeri Barchilon; From *Vault of Horror* #28–1; Directed by Chris Walas; airdate: April 24, 1990; *Guest Cast*: D.W. Moffett (Logan Andrews); Pamela Gien (Margaret Richardson); Aubrey Morris (Freddy); Janet Hubert (Psyche).

A man who had hoped to inherit a fortune discovers that his “plantation” is just swampland and muck, so he enlists the aid of a voodoo expert to make a wealthy young woman fall in love with him. The plan backfires on him, however, when his new love turns out to be way too persistent for his taste.

**11. “Three’s a Crowd”** Written by Kim Ketelsen, Annie Willette, David Burton Morris; From *Shock SuspenStories* #11-4; Directed by David Burton Morris; airdate: May 1, 1990; *Guest Cast*: Gavin O’Herlihy (Richard); Ruth Desosa (Della); Paul Lieber (Alan).

A man, his wife, and his best friend retreat to a lovely cabin to celebrate a wedding anniversary. The husband, who has been a failure in his career and married life, suspects that his best friend and wife are having an affair, but he discovers in a most surprising way just how wrong he is.

**12. “The Thing from the Grave”** Written and directed by Fred Dekker; From *Tales from the Crypt* #22–1; airdate: May 8, 1990; *Guest Cast*: Miguel Ferrer (Mitch); Teri Hatcher (Stacey); Kyle Secor (Cates); Laird MacIntosh, Cindy Riegel.

An insanely jealous Mitch murders the friend of his beautiful young girlfriend, Stacey, but is unaware that the dead man gave his wife a most unusual trinket: a necklace which promises to bind the photographer Cates and Stacey forever. Soon, the dead Cates, now a rotting corpse, comes a callin’ when the abusive Mitch mistreats his girlfriend.

**13. “The Sacrifice”** Written by Ross Thomas; From *Shock SuspenStories* #10–1; Directed by Richard Greenberg; airdate: May 15, 1990; *Guest Cast*: Kevin Kilner (Reed); Kim Delaney (Gloria); Michael Ironside (Jerry); Don Hood (Sebastian); Willie C. Carpenter, Deborah Packer, Dana Craig.

An insurance salesman and the wife of a millionaire plot to murder her wealthy husband and spend the rest of their lives together. The murder is no perfect crime, however, because the insurance salesman’s boss has taken photographs of the planned death and now *he* wants the wife of the millionaire for himself.

**14. “For Cryin’ out Loud”** Written by Peter S. Seaman and Jeffrey Price; From *Shock SuspenStories* #15-3; Directed by Jeffrey Price; airdate: May 22, 1990; *Guest Cast*: Lee Arenberg (Marty Slash); Katey Sagal (Miss Killbosa); Iggy Pop (Himself); Sam Kinison (Conscience); Al White, Mark Lowenthal (Doctor); Lee Morgan (Stage Manager); Joe Restivo (Chief Kabubi/Sid); Richard Stay (Spud); Tiffanie Poston (Waitress); John Lafayette (Older Guard); Vince Melocchi (Young Guard); Dean Cleverdon (Priest); Tony Sales (Bass Player); Frank Infante (Guitar Player); Hunt Sales (Drummer); Spyder Mittleman (Saxophone Player).

Marty Slash, a corrupt and greedy rock 'n' roll promoter who plans to steal a million dollars from his “Save the Amazon” charity, is troubled when he unexpectedly hears the voice of his conscience. When a jangled Marty plans a little felony and then a murder or two, his conscience steps up to protest.

**15. “Four-Sided Triangle”** Written by James Tugend and Tom Holland; From *Shock SuspenStories* #17-1; Directed by Tom Holland; airdate: May 29, 1990; *Guest Cast*: Patricia Arquette (Mary Jo); Chelcie Ross, Susan J. Blommaert.

A suggestible young woman who is tortured by her life on the farm and seeks an escape imagines that a scarecrow is her savior, a secret lover. Old George, who persists in trying to rape the girl, one night decides to dress up as the scarecrow and give Mary Jo a surprise she'll never forget.

**16. “The Ventriloquist’s Dummy”** Written by Frank Darabont; From *Tales from the Crypt* #28-4; Directed by Richard Donner; airdate: June 5, 1990; *Guest Cast*: Don Rickles (Ingels); Bobcat Goldthwait (Billy); Shelley Taylor Morgan (Sally); Steve Susskind, April Clawson, Mindy Rickles, Joyce Katz.

An old ventriloquist inspires a young man to follow in his footsteps. The young man is a failure, however, and he seeks to learn the older man's secret of success.

**17. “Judy, You’re Not Yourself Today”** Written by Scott Nimerfro; From *Tales from the Crypt* #25-2; Directed by Randa Haines; airdate: June 12, 1990; *Guest Cast*: Carol Kane (Judy); Brian Kerwin (Don); Frances Bay, David Dunard, Kerrie Cullen, Todd Field.

An abused wife is tricked into trading bodies with an old witch when she tries on a mysterious amulet. The husband learns of the deception and tries to force another switch, this time with deadly results.

**18. “Fitting Punishment”** Written by Jonathan David Kahn; Michael Alan Kahn, Don Mancini; From *Vault of Horror* #16-2; Directed by Jack Sholder; airdate: June 19, 1990; *Guest Cast*: Moses Gunn, Jon Clair, Teddy Wilson, Nick La Tour (Doctor); Al Fann (Mr. Jeffries); Joanne Jackson (Woman in Mourning); Clifford Strong, Ousaun Elam (Stunt Doubles).

A young boy whose parents have been killed in a car accident on I-95 goes to live with his cruel Uncle Ezra, a cost-cutting mortician with no heart. Uncle Ezra beats the boy into a state of paralysis and then kills him ... which leaves the boy's sneakers and severed feet to eke out a bizarre revenge.

**19. “Korman’s Kalamity”** Written by Terry Black; From *Tales from the Crypt* #31-3; Directed by Rowdy Herrington; airdate: June 26, 1990; *Guest Cast*: Harry Anderson (Jim Korman); Cynthia Gibb (Lorelei Phillips); Colleen Camp (Mildred); Austin Strauss (Bob Grimes); Lance Davis (Art Goldstein); Richard Schiff (Lester Middleton); Abel Franco (Lt. Bushmill); Michael Lee Owens

(Douglas); Eric Mettner (Butch); Artis Phillips, Jr. (News Vendor); Tom Woodruff, Jr. (Utility Monster); Mike Watson, Kerrie Cullen (Stunts).

An overworked comic artist at *Tales from the Crypt* magazine is accosted by his obnoxious wife when he forgets to take his infertility pills, Potency Plus. The drugs have the unusual side effect of making Jim's imaginary comic monsters come to life.

**20. "Lower Berth"** Written by Fred Dekker; Directed by Kevin Yagher; From *Tales from the Crypt* #33-1; airdate: July 3, 1990; *Guest Cast*: Lewis Arquette, Stefan Gierasch, Mark Rolston, Jeff Yagher (Enoch—The Two Faced Man).

The Crypt Keeper reveals his family's twisted family tree in this story of a circus freak who hopes to find true love, and eventually discovers it with the "lovely" corpse of a long-dead princess.

**21. "Mute Witness to Murder"** Written by Nancy Doyne; From *Crypt of Terror* #18-4; Directed by Jim Simpson; airdate: July 10, 1990; *Guest Cast*: Richard Thomas (Doctor); Patricia Clarkson (Suzie); Reed Birney, Kristine Nielsen, Rose Weaver.

A woman witnesses a murder and goes into mute shock over what she saw. Unfortunately, her doctor turns out to be the murderer, and the woman ends up voiceless and defenseless under his tender-loving care.

**22. "Television Terror"** Written by J. Randal Johnson and G.J. Pruss; From *Haunt of Fear* #17-2; Directed by Charles Picerni; airdate: July 17, 1990; *Guest Cast*: Morton Downey Jr. (Horton Rivers); Dorothy Parke, Peter Van Norden, M.K. Harris, Warren Burton.

A nasty, boorish TV talk show host, Horton Rivers, stages a ratings coup when he arranges to broadcast "live" from a haunted house which was the site of a multiple murder spree. Horton and his cameraman soon learn that high ratings might not be worth a night spent in that house, which is populated by some unruly and unhappy spirits.

**23. "My Brother's Keeper"** Written by Jeffrey Price and Peter S. Seaman; From *Shock SuspenStories* #16-1; Directed by Peter S. Seaman; airdate: July 24, 1990; *Guest Cast*: Timothy Stack (Frank); Jonathan Stark (Eddie); Jessica Harper (Marie); Ron Orbach, Valerie Bickford, C.J. Johnson, Trixie Hall.

Siamese twins Eddie and Frank are sick to death of each other and want to be separated, especially because Frank has recently fallen in love. However, a murder soon takes place, and the twins begin to work against one another to gain the upper hand.

**24. "The Secret"** Written by Doug Ronning; From *Haunt of Fear* #24-3; Directed by Michael Riva; airdate: July 31, 1990; *Guest Cast*: Larry Drake (Tobias), Grace Zabriskie (Mrs. Colbert), Mike Simmrin, Georgann Johnson, Stella Hall, William Frankfather.

A young boy whose parents have died recently is adopted by a bizarre couple, the Colberts. The boy learns from a friendly butler that his benefactors are actually vampires, but the boy has a secret of his own.

• *Third Season (1991)*

**25. "The Trap"** Written by Scott Alexander; *From Shock SuspenStories #18-2*; Directed by Michael J. Fox; airdate: June 15, 1991; *Guest Cast*: Teri Garr (Irene Poloma); Bruno Kirby (Billy Poloma); Bruce McGill (Lou Poloma); James Tolkan (Sgt. McClain); Carroll Baker (Mother Poloma); Carlos Lacamara (Paolo); Michael J. Fox (Prosecutor); Yvette Freeman (Jury Foreman); Ben Hartigan (Chaplain).

Lou Poloma has lost his job as a pizza delivery man and he plots to collect his life insurance money without actually dying. Lou, his wife Irene, and his coroner brother Billy plot Lou's "death" ... but the plan's execution leaves something to be desired.

**26. "Loved to Death"** Written by Joseph Minion and John Mankiewicz; *From Tales from the Crypt #25-3*; Directed by Tom Makiewicz; airdate: June 15, 1991; *Guest Cast*: Andrew McCarthy (Edward Foster); Mariel Hemingway (Louise/Miranda Singer); David Hemmings (Mr. Stronam); Kathleen Freeman (Mrs. Parker).

A struggling screenwriter keeps writing about the same woman, a beautiful but shallow actress who lives in his apartment building. With the assistance of a mysterious apartment manager, Edward sets about winning her heart ... even if it means dabbling in the occult and slipping a magic potion into her drink.

**27. "Carrion Death"** Written and directed by Steven E. DeSouza; *From Shock SuspenStories #9-4*; airdate: June 15, 1991; *Guest Cast*: Kyle MacLachlan (Diggs); George Deloy (Cop).

An escaped convict is captured by a police officer after a chase through the blistering hot desert. Unfortunately, the convict has a problem: the cop swallowed the keys to his handcuffs before dying, and now the convict must drag quite a bit of dead weight if he hopes to make good his escape.

**28. "Abra Cadaver"** Written by Jim Birge; *From Tales from the Crypt #3-26*; Directed by Stephen Hopkins; airdate: June 19, 1991; *Guest Cast*: Beau Bridges (Martin Fairbanks); Tony Goldwyn (Carl Fairbanks); Tom Wright (Mitch); Lucinda West (Kelly); Peter Schuck (Bernie); Hugh Holub (Al); Tina Bockrath (Paula Cadaver).

In the medical school morgue, Martin helps his younger brother Carl pass anatomy ... but Carl has staged a ghoulish trick to wish his brother a happy birthday. Years later, Martin goes to Carl with some frightening proof that Haitian voodoo has practical medical applications.

**29. "Top Billing"** Written by Myles Berkowitz; *From Tales from the Crypt #39-2*; Directed by Todd Holland; airdate: June 26, 1991; *Guest Cast*: Jon Lovitz (Barry Blythe); Bruce Boxleitner (Winton Robins); John Astin (Nelson Halliwell); Louise Fletcher (Agent); Kimmy Robertson (Lisa); Paul Benedict (Beeks); Sandra Bernhard (Sheila Winters); Bob Larkin (Grave Digger); Joseph Cardinale (Mr. Kroger); Jason Kelly (Officer); Gregory Cooke.

A desperate, out-of-work actor who has just been dropped by his agent auditions for a bizarre theater production of *Hamlet*. He finds himself in competition with a handsome, notable star for the role of a lifetime, and resorts to murder.

**30. "Dead Wait"** Written by A.L. Katz and Gilbert Adler; *From Vault of Horror #23-3*; Directed by Tobe Hooper; airdate: July 3, 1991; *Guest Cast*: Whoopi Goldberg (Peligre); James Remar (Red);

John Rhys-Davies (Duval); Vanity (Katrine), Orlando Bonner, Henry Brown, Paul Anthony Weber.

On a remote island, a crook and a mistress seek to kill a millionaire who owns a priceless gem. The crook, a man with red hair, soon learns that different objects are considered priceless in different cultures when his scalp becomes the object of one priestess's murderous desire.

**31. "The Reluctant Vampire"** Written by Terry Black; From *Vault of Horror* #20-2; Directed by Elliott Silverstein; airdate: July 10, 1991; *Guest Cast*: Malcolm McDowell (Donald Longtooth); Sandra Searles Dickinson (Sally); George Wendt (Mr. Crosswhite); Michael Berryman (Rupert Van Helsing); Paul Gleason (Detective); Gloria Dawson (Old Lady).

A vampire awakens, says good morning to his pet Rat, Leopold, and goes to work at Sunnyside Blood Bank—where supplies of blood are mysteriously diminishing. The vampire has been stealing the precious fluid because he is too much of a coward to kill anyone ... except perhaps for the obese Mr. Crossway, who has been harassing the sweethearted co-worker, Sally.

**32. "Easel Kill Ya"** Written by Larry Wilson; From *Vault of Horror* #31-1; Directed by John Harrison; airdate: July 17, 1991; *Guest Cast*: Tim Roth (Jack Craig); William Atherton (Malcom Mayflower); Roy Megnot, Nancy Fish, Deborah Mooney, Stuart Mabray (Dr. Mowbray); Mary McKuen (Group Leader); Rod Britt (Man); Kevin Brief (Detective).

A washed-up alcoholic painter inadvertently commits murder and then paints the crime scene. He takes the resultant objet d'art to the mysterious Malcom Mayflower, the world's foremost collector of "morbid" art ... who wants another masterpiece and is willing to pay \$20,000 for it!

**33. "Undertaking Pallor"** Written by Ron Finley; From *Tales from the Crypt* #39-1; Directed by Michael Thau; airdate: July 24, 1991; *Guest Cast*: John Glover (Mr. Esbrook); Graham Jarvis (Nate); Aron Eisenberg, Scott Fults (Normie); Jason Marsden, Jonathan Quan (Josh).

Four jokester teens who have a fondness for horror films and video cameras sneak into a funeral parlor one dark night. They are trapped inside when a crazed undertaker returns to work on a corpse named Lucy, and are surprised when they realize the undertaker and the town pharmacist are involved in a gruesome conspiracy.

**34. "Mournin' Mess"** Written and directed by Manny Coto; From *Tales from the Crypt* #38-4; airdate: July 31, 1991; *Guest Cast*: Steven Weber (Dale Sweeney); Rita Wilson (Jess); Ally Walker (Elaine Tillman); Vincent Schiavelli (Homeless Man); Nick Angotti, Frank Kopyc, Stack Pierce (Dancer); Gary Pagett (Minister); Jacqlyn Moet (Woman).

A serial killer stalking the homeless strikes again in the dark of night. An alcoholic, womanizing reporter comes face-to-face with a bum who has been mistaken for the killer and who claims that a city project called "the Grateful Homeless Society" is responsible for the deaths.

**35. "Split Second"** Written by Richard Christian Matheson; From *Shock SuspenStories* #4-1; Directed by Russell Mulcahy; airdate: August 7, 1991; *Guest Cast*: Brion James (Dixon); Michelle Johnson (Liz); Billy Wirth (Ted Morgan); Dan Martin (Snaz); Alan Palo (Artie); Tony Pierce (Banjo).

A slutty waitress marries a hot-tempered mountain man who came to her defense in a bar fight. She

soon grows tired of the marriage and starts a dangerous affair with a handsome young logger.

**36. “Deadline”** Written by Mae Woods and Walter Hill; From *Shock SuspenStories* #12–1; Directed by Walter Hill; airdate: August 14, 1991; *Guest Cast*: Richard Jordan (Charlie MacKenzie); Jon Polito (Mike); Richard Herd (Phil Stone); John Capodice (Niko Stavro); Rutanya Alda (Mildred); Marg Helgenberger (Vicki); Jean Berns (Globe Secretary).

An alcoholic former newspaper reporter with a reputation for going to any length to get his story falls in love with a mysterious and gorgeous bar hopper named Vicki. The reporter gets his old newspaper job back on the condition that he bring the editor a story about murder ... which dovetails nicely with his new love life.

**37. “Spoiled”** Written by Connie Johnson and Doug Ronning; From *Haunt of Fear* #26-3; Directed by Andy Wolk; airdate: August 21, 1991; *Guest Cast*: Faye Grant (Janet); Anthony LaPaglia (Abel); Alan Rachins, Tristan Rogers, Annabelle Gurwitch, Anita Morris, Parker Kane.

The wife of a nasty doctor is so lonely that she lives in the fantasy world of her afternoon soap operas. One day, her TV breaks down and an affair is begun with a handsome cable repair man ... but the adulterers soon find out that the Doctor is watching them.

**38. “Yellow”** Written by John and Jim Thomas, A.L. Katz, and Gilbert Adler; From *Shock SuspenStories* #1-2; Directed by Robert Zemeckis; airdate: August 28, 1991; *Guest Cast*: Kirk Douglas (General Calthrop); Eric Douglas (Martin Calthrop); Lance Henriksen (Sgt. Ripper); Dan Aykroyd (Captain Milligan); Dominick Morra (Priest); Steve Boyum (King); Charles Picerni, Jr. (Jones); Anthony Gallo (Corporal); R. David Smith (Soldier).

In the Year 1918, during World War I in France, on the 49th day of continual battle, a lieutenant calls a retreat during combat. His father, General Calthrop, retaliates by sending the “yellow” officer, his only son, on a suicide mission to repair a communications cable.

• *Fourth Season (1992)*

**39. “None but the Lonely Heart”** Written by Donald Longtooth; From *Tales from the Crypt* #33-4; Directed by Tom Hanks; airdate: June 27, 1992; *Guest Cast*: Treat Williams (Howard); Frances Sternhagen (Ephie); Bibi Osterwald, Henry Gibson (Butler); Tom Hanks, Sugar Ray Leonard (Gravedigger).

A gold-digging con man has married and then murdered one too many old biddies. After his latest wedding and murder, he is confronted by a gravedigger who knows the truth about him and is all-too-willing to show him the personal impact of his life’s work.

**40. “This’ll Kill Ya”** Written by A.L. Katz and Gilbert Adler; From *Crime SuspenStories* #23–1; Directed by Robert Longo; airdate: June 27, 1992; *Guest Cast*: Sonia Braga (Sophie Wagner); Dylan McDermott (George Gatlin); Cleavon Little (Pack Brightman); Rick Aiello (Marty); Scott Williamson (Sgt. Murphy).

An arrogant, news-seeking doctor working with two scientist partners releases publicity material stating that their experimental drug is ready for human testing ... even though such a stage is six months away. Then the doctor is accidentally injected with the drug—which will soon start to create

tumors all over his body.

**41. “On a Deadman’s Chest”** Written by Larry Wilson; From *Haunt of Fear* #12-2; Directed by William Friedkin; airdate: June 27, 1992; *Guest Cast*: Tia Carrere (Scarlett); Yul Vasquez (Danny Dark); Paul Hipp (Guitarist); Sherrie Rose, Heavy D, Gregg Allman (Musicians).

A rock star in the group *Exorcist* goes to a tattoo artist with a taste for voodoo, who carves the face of his girlfriend, Scarlett, on his chest. As the rock star soon learns, the tattoo cannot be removed but worse than that it taunts and terrorizes him until he is driven to murder.

**42. “Séance”** Written by Harry Anderson; From *Vault of Horror* #25–1; Directed by Gary Fleder; airdate: July 4, 1992; *Guest Cast*: John Vernon (Chalmers); Cathy Moriarty, Ben Crose, Ellen Crawford, Lupe Ontiveros, Tim Ahren, G.F. Smith.

A couple of con-artists attempt to blackmail a man with suggestive photographs they have taken. When that plot fails and the man dies in an accident, the duo attempt to pull another con on his blind wife ... but that backfires too.

**43. “Beauty Rest”** Written by Donald Longtooth; From *Vault of Horror* #35-3; Directed by Stephen Hopkins; airdate: July 11, 1992; *Guest Cast*: Mimi Rogers, Kathy Ireland, Jennifer Rubin, Buck Henry, Robert Rebor, Maria Pecci, Michael Wiseman.

A nasty supermodel murders all her competitors to win first place in a coveted beauty pageant. The only problem is the title of this particular pageant: Miss Autopsy 1992.

**44. “What’s Cookin”** Written by A.L. Katz and Gilbert Adler; From *Haunt of Fear* #12-4; Directed by Gilbert Adler; airdate: July 22, 1992; *Guest Cast*: Christopher Reeve (Fred); Bess Armstrong (Erma); Gaston (Judd Nelson); Meat Loaf (Landlord); Art LaFleur, Jeanette Lewis, Helen Nasillski.

Two entrepreneurs riding a failing restaurant business are faced with eviction when their unsympathetic landlord threatens to end their lease. A stranger comes along who commits murder and then suggests a new specialty of the day.

**45. “The New Arrival”** Written by Ron Finley; From *Haunt of Fear* #25–1; Directed by Peter Medak; airdate: July 25, 1992; *Guest Cast*: David Warner (Alan Getz); Twiggy Lawson (Felicity); Joan Severance, Zelda Rubinstein, Robert Patrick.

A prominent child psychologist with his own radio show is in need of both an ego and ratings boost so he takes on a difficult case. He attempts to help a strange little woman with her daughter Felicity, a child who is in fact a vicious little ghoul.

**46. “Showdown”** Written by Frank Darabont; From *Two-Fisted Tales* #37-4; Directed by Richard Donner; airdate: August 1, 1992; *Guest Cast*: David Morse, Neil Gray Giuntoli, Roderick Cook, Thomas E. Duffy.

In the Old West, a young gunslinger ends up in a quick draw competition in a ghost town. Although he kills his opponent, he soon finds himself confronting the spirits of gunmen past.

**47. “King of the Road”** Written by J. Randal Johnson; From *Two-Fisted Tales*; Directed by Tom



Holland; airdate: August 8, 1992; *Guest Cast*: Raymond J. Barry (Iceman); Brad Pitt, Jack Keeler, Michele Bronson.

A young hot-shot believes he can beat any man in a drag race, but there is a problem: a drag-racer turned police officer named Iceman has a reputation in those parts for being unbeatable. The youngster comes up with a devilish plan to bring the competition out of retirement and prove once and for all who is the fastest man behind the wheel.

**48. “Maniac at Large”** Written by Mae Woods; From *Crime SuspenStories* #27–1; Directed by John Frankenheimer; airdate: August 19, 1992; *Guest Cast*: Blythe Danner, Salome Jens, Clarence Williams III, Adam Ant, Obba Babatunde.

A meek librarian is convinced that one of her patrons is actually a serial killer on the loose. As night falls, and the woman fears for her life, the truth is revealed.

**49. “Split Personality”** written by Fred Dekker; From *Vault of Horror* #31; Directed by Joel Silver; airdate: August 26, 1992; *Guest Cast*: Joe Pesci (Stetson); Burt Young, Jacqueline Alexandra, Kristen Amber.

A man seduces a set of beautiful twins by convincing them that he is actually a twin as well. When the girls discover the deception, they decide it is time to “split” up.

**50. “Strung Along”** Written by Yale Udoff and Kevin Yagher; From *Vault of Horror* #33-4; Directed by Kevin Yagher; airdate: September 2, 1992; *Guest Cast*: Donald O’Connor, Patricia Charbonneau, Zach Galligan.

In a bizarre spin on the Pinocchio myth, a malevolent marionette called Koko comes to life to avenge the death of his master. He goes after the puppeteer’s wife and lover, who murdered his maker.

**51. “Werewolf Concerto”** Written by Scott Nimerfro; From *Vault of Horror* #16–1; Directed by Steve Perry; airdate: September 9, 1992; *Guest Cast*: Timothy Dalton (Mr. Lokai); Dennis Farina (Mr. Antoine); Walter Gotell (Mr. Hurtz); Charles Fleischer (Carl Ejack); Beverly D’Angelo (Janice Baird); Wolfgang Puck (Himself); Jason Iorg (Peiter); Marci Simon (Chamber Maid); Andref Bustanoby (Werewolf); Reginald Vel Johnson, Lela Rochon.

A group of wealthy vacationers are stranded in an expensive hotel when a werewolf starts to kill tourists. The hotel’s owner warns that there is both a werewolf and a werewolf hunter on the premises ... but nobody knows who is who.

**52. “Curiosity Killed”** Written by Stanley Ralph Ross; From *Tales from the Crypt* 36-2; Directed by Elliot Silverstein; airdate: September 16, 1992; *Guest Cast*: Margot Kidder, Kevin McCarthy, J.A. Preston, Madge Sinclair.

Another husband is irritated by his obnoxious wife and driven to murder, but this time there is more at stake, including a strange serum which can supposedly grant youth to its taker.

• *Fifth Season (1993)*

**53. “Death of Some Salesmen”** Written by A.L. Katz and Gilbert Adler; From *Haunt of Fear* #15-4;

Directed by Gilbert Adler; airdate: October 2, 1993; *Guest Cast*: Tim Curry (Ma/Pa/Winona Brackett); Ed Begley, Jr. (Judd Campbell); Yvonne De Carlo (Mrs. Jones); Kathe Weekes (Stella).

A cemetery plot salesman crosses the country scamming good-natured people and suckers out of their life-savings and hard-earned cash. He makes one stop too many, however, when he pauses at the Brackett estate and learns that the only future he can have (alive) is one with the homely daughter, Winona.

**54. “As Ye Sow”** Written by Ron Finley; From *Shock SuspenStories* #14-4; Directed by Kyle MacLachlan; airdate: October 2, 1993; *Guest Cast*: Patsy Kensit, John Shea, Hector Elizondo, Adam West, Sam Waterston, Miguel Ferrer.

A man suspects that his wife is cheating on him and so hires an assassin to off his competition, a priest! When the husband sneaks into the confessional booth to hear his wife’s innermost thoughts, a case of mistaken identities ensues.

**55. “Forever Ambergris”** Written by Scott Rosenberg; From *Tales from the Crypt* #44–1; Directed by Gary Fleder; airdate: October 2, 1993; *Guest Cast*: Roger Daltrey (Dalton); Steve Buscemi (Ike); Lysette Anthony.

A photographer who is threatened by an up-and-comer sees to it that his competition dies of a deadly disease in a war zone. When he returns home, the murderous photographer tries to claim the dead man’s wife, but she has other plans.

**56. “Food for Thought”** Written by Larry Wilson; From *Tales from the Crypt* #40–1; Directed by Rodman Flender; airdate: October 6, 1993; *Guest Cast*: Ernie Hudson (Zambini); Joan Chen (Connie); John Laughlin, Phil Fondacaro, Kathryn Howell, Margaret Howell.

A psychic uses his considerable mental abilities to make life a living hell for a woman in the circus whom he has fallen in love with. When she flees the Big Top, the psychic employs his psychic powers again ... but he rings up a very different animal than the one he expected.

**57. “People Who Live in Brass Hearses”** Written by Scott Nimerfro; From *Vault of Horror* #27-2; Directed by Russell Mulcahy; airdate: October 13, 1993; *Guest Cast*: Bill Paxton (Billy); Brad Dourif (Virgil); Michael Lerner (Mr. Byrd); Lainie Kazan.

A criminal hoping to get away with a heist against the man who sent him away to prison enlists the help of his brother. The two men find danger, an empty safe, and a deadly pair of Siamese twins.

**58. “Two for the Show”** Written by A.L. Katz and Gilbert Adler; From *Crime SuspensStories* #7-4; Directed by Kevin Hooks; airdate: October 20, 1993; *Guest Cast*: David Paymer, Traci Lords, Vincent Spano.

In a fit of rage, a man has murdered his cheating wife, but the real trick will be to dispose of the body without the cops finding out. A case of mistaken “trunks” fingers the man as a murderer before the tale is over.

**59. “House of Horror”** Written and directed by Bob Gale; From *Haunt of Fear* #15-2; airdate:

October 27, 1993; *Guest Cast*: Kevin Dillon (Wilton); Keith Coogan, Wil Wheaton, Brian Krause, Jason London, Michael DeLuise, Courtney Gains, Meredith Salinger.

It's hell night at the local fraternity and this is one hazing that goes terribly wrong when a trio of pledges are forced to endure a night in a haunted house. The fraternity jock behind the plot gets his comeuppance when he discovers a surprise in the attic.

**60. "Well-Cooked Hams"** Written by Andrew Kevin Walker; From *Tales from the Crypt* #27-1; Directed by Elliot Silverstein; airdate: November 3, 1993; *Guest Cast*: Billy Zane, Martin Sheen, Maryam D'Abo.

A magician with little talent but great dreams decides it is time to off a master and steal his tricks. His former assistant and the older magician prove to the young usurper that a little magic goes a long way.

**61. "Creep Course"** Written and directed by Jeffrey Boam; From *Haunt of Fear* #23-1; airdate: November 10, 1993; *Guest Cast*: Jeffrey Jones (Professor Finley); Anthony Michael Hall (Reggie Skullnick); Nino Siemaszko (Stella Fisher); Julius Carry (Detective Connors); Rae Norman (Dean Edna Cume).

A football jock in danger of failing his Egyptology class recruits a bookworm to help him steal the midterm from the home of their professor, a collector of rare Egyptian artifacts. The plan goes awry when the professor locks the girl in an authentic burial chamber in order to sacrifice her to Ramseth—the Mummy who wouldn't die.

**62. "Came the Dawn"** Written by Ron Finley; From *Shock SuspenStories* #9-2; Directed by Uli Edel; airdate: November 17, 1993; *Guest Cast*: Perry King (Roger); Brooke Shields, Michael J. Pollard, Valerie Wildman.

A man in the remote forest takes in a beautiful stranger at his isolated cabin. At the same time, an axe murderer is loose in the region.

**63. "Oil's Well That Ends Well"** Written by Scott Nimerfro; From *Vault of Horror* #34-2; Directed by Paul Abascal; airdate: November 24, 1993; *Guest Cast*: Priscilla Presley, Lou Diamond Phillips, Rory Calhoun, John Kassir, Steve Kahan, Alan Ruck, Noble Willingham.

Two small-time crooks plan a confidence game involving a graveyard and the promise that there is oil beneath it. The marks in this case prove they are not so easily taken in, and the graveyard hides a startling surprise.

**64. "Half-Way Horrible"** Written and directed by Gregory Widen; From *Vault of Horror* #26-3; airdate: December 1, 1993; *Guest Cast*: Clancy Brown (Roger Lassen); Martin Kove, Costas Mandylor, Charles Martin Smith, Cheech Marin, Brian Wimmer, Jon Tenney.

A chemical preservative, murder, and a strange voodoo secret are the ingredients in this thriller about an unscrupulous business man who is plagued not only by guilt, but by zombies as well.

**65. "Till Death Do We Part"** Written and directed by Peter Iliff; From *Haunt of Fear* #12-3; airdate: December 8, 1993; *Guest Cast*: Kate Vernon, John Stamos, Robert Picardo, Eileen Brennan, Frank

Stallone, Johnny Williams, Rich Duggan, Tony Epper.

A handsome gigolo spending time with an older lady decides to cheat on her with a beautiful young woman instead. As revenge, the old lady with the purse strings orders the gigolo to execute his new lover.

• *Sixth Season (1994)*

**66. “Let the Punishment Fit the Crime”** Written by Ron Finley; From *Vault of Horror* #33-2; Directed by Russell Mulcahy; airdate: October 31, 1994; *Guest Cast*: Catherine O’Hara, Peter MacNicol, Joseph Maher, Wesley Mann, Kevin Cooney.

A corrupt lawyer finds herself in a bizarre, Kafkaesque level of hell wherein she is put on trial for a traffic violation in a small town and sentenced to serve the court ... for eternity.

**67. “Only Skin Deep”** Written by Dick Beebe; From *Tales from the Crypt* #38-2; Directed by William Malone; airdate: October 31, 1994; *Guest Cast*: Peter Onorati, Sherrie Rose, Stephen Liska, Diane Dilascio.

A man picks up a woman at a masquerade ball who appears to be wearing a porcelain mask. They promise to remain anonymous, and the man makes passionate love to the mysterious woman, who has a great body, only to discover that the mask ... and her apartment ... hide terrible evils.

**68. “Whirlpool”** Written by A.L. Katz and Gilbert Adler; From *Vault of Horror* #32–1; Directed by Mick Garris; airdate: October 31, 1994; *Guest Cast*: Rita Rudner, Richard Lewis, A.L. Katz, Roger Kalber, Blake Clark.

A graphic novel story artist at *Tales from the Crypt* finds herself endlessly reliving her own comic book story ... which ends in murder, and then begins again.

**69. “Operation Friendship”** Written by Rob Ross; From *Tales from the Crypt* #41–1; Directed by Ronald Meza; airdate: November 9, 1994; *Guest Cast*: Tate Donovan (Nelson); Peter Dobson (Eddie); Jane (Michelle Rene Thomas); John Caponera, Ethan Slupee, Shelby Leverington.

A computer geek is tired of letting people get the best of him at work and in his personal life, so he designs an alter ego with all the characteristics he lacks: confidence, ego, even arrogance. However, once unleashed the alter ego proves far more interesting than the original ... who now fears for his life.

**70. “Revenge Is the Nuts”** Written by Shel Willens; From *Vault of Horror* #20-4; Directed by Jonas McCord; airdate: November 16, 1994; *Guest Cast*: Teri Polo (Sheila); John Savage (Benny); Anthony Zerbe, Bibi Besch, Isaac Hayes, Tim Sampson.

The cruel proprietor of a hospital for sightless patients terrorizes his wards and even tries to force one beautiful new patient to go to bed with him against her will. With a help of a kindly, but none-too-bright man who works at the hospital, justice in this case proves that it is not blind.

**71. “The Bribe”** Written by Scott Nimerfro; From *Shock SuspenStories* #7-2; Directed by Ramon Menendez; airdate: November 23, 1994; *Guest Cast*: Terry O’Quinn (Zoller); Esai Morales (Puck);

Kimberly Williams, Benicio Del Toro, Hal Williams, Max Grodenchik.

A fire inspector plots a burning revenge when he learns that his daughter has been dancing at a local strip club. He orders the place set aflame, but there are terrible results.

**72. “The Pit”** Written and directed by John Harrison; From *Vault of Horror* #40-3; airdate: November 30, 1994; *Guest Cast*: Mark Dacascos, Wayne Newton, Debbe Dunning, Marjean Holdean, Stoney Jackson.

It’s survival of the fittest when two men prepare to combat one another in a highly publicized broadcast fight to the death. Oddly enough, it is not the men who are mortal enemies, but their obnoxious wives ... so the women enter the fray and kick a little butt instead.

**73. “The Assassin”** Written by Scott Nimerfro; From *Shock SuspenStories* #17-3; Directed by Martin Von Haselberg; airdate: December 7, 1994; *Guest Cast*: Shelley Hack (Janet); Chelsea Field (Gwen); William Sadler (The Grim Reaper); Jonathan Banks, Marshall Teague, Corey Feldman.

A lonely woman is surprised when her home is trampled by hardcore CIA operatives who claim that her estranged husband, a CIA assassin, is plotting to kill her. In fact, things are not quite what they seem.

**74. “Staired in Horror”** Written by Teller deKay and Colman deKay; From *Vault of Horror* #23-4; Directed by Stephen Hopkins; airdate: December 14, 1994; *Guest Cast*: D.B. Sweeney, Rachel Ticotin, R. Lee Ermey.

A crook hides out in a haunted old mansion where a woman suffers from a strange curse. Because she cheated on her husband long, long ago, the woman ages into an old hag every time she descends her staircase.

**75. “In the Groove”** Written by Jack Temchin and Colman deKay; From *Crime SuspenStories* #21-2; Directed by Vincent Spano; airdate: December 21, 1994; *Guest Cast*: Miguel Ferrer (Gary Grover); Linda Doucette (Val); Wendie Malick, Slash, Rusty Schwimmer.

A radio talk show host who is sliding down the ratings is teamed with a sexy new partner. The ratings go up, and the new partner suggests to Gary that he commit murder to cement his demographic position.

**76. “Surprise Party”** Written by Tom Lyons and Colman DeKay; From *Vault of Horror* #37–1; Directed by Elliot Silverstein; airdate: December 28, 1994; *Guest Cast*: Adam Storke, Clare Hoak, Jake Busey, Rance Howard.

A young man who has inherited the estate of his father learns that he has inherited much more than a home: he has inherited his father’s sins as well.

**77. “Doctor of Horror”** Written and directed by Larry Wilson; From *Vault of Horror* #13-3; airdate: January 4, 1995; *Guest Cast*: Hank Azaria (Richard); Travis Tritt (Charlie); Austin Pendleton (Doctor); Ben Stein.

Two security guards at the morgue run afoul of a mad doctor who claims that he has found a way to

extract the soul from dead human beings. The doctor enlists the two guards to procure bodies for his bizarre experiments, but they end up committing murder to keep the experiment a secret.

**78. “Comes the Dawn”** Written by Scott Nimerfro; From *Haunt of Fear* #26-4; Directed by John Herzfeld; airdate: January 11, 1995; *Guest Cast*: Michael Ironside, Bruce Payne, Vivian Wu, Susan Tyrrell.

Two army officers trudge through the Alaskan wilderness hunting bears, and they are aided on their trek by a well-known tracker of the region. Unbeknownst to the hunters, however, the tracker is a vampire and she comes from a colony of very hungry vampires.

**79. “99 and 44/100% Pure Horror”** Written and directed by Rodman Flender; From *Vault of Horror* #23-2; airdate: January 18, 1995; *Guest Cast*: Cristi Conaway (Wila); Bruce Davison, Darin Heames, Kelly Coffield, Ricky Dean Logan.

An artist is angry when her successful ad campaign for a soap company is thrown down the drain by the company president, who happens to be her husband. She takes bloody revenge on her husband, but her hatred starts to “bubble up” in more ways than one.

**80. “You, Murderer”** Written by A.L. Katz and Gilbert Adler; From *Shock SuspenStories* #14-3; Directed by Robert Zemeckis; airdate: January 25, 1995; *Guest Cast*: Humphrey Bogart (Lou Spinelli); John Lithgow (Oscar Charles); Sherilyn Fenn (Erica); Isabella Rossellini (Betty); Robert Saachi; Julie Ariola (Doris); Carl Gillard (Paramedic #2); Jose Rey (Paramedic #1); With a special “appearance” by Alfred Hitchcock.

This is the highly publicized *Tales from the Crypt* episode which combines *Forrest Gump* technology with a film-noir plot and appearances by Alfred Hitchcock (in the Crypt Keeper introduction) and Humphrey Bogart. It all begins when a dead man explains, from beyond the grave, how he came to have a face just like Humphrey Bogart’s.

• *Seventh Season (1996)*

**81. “Fatal Caper”** Written by Colman deKay, A.L. Katz and Gilbert Adler; From *Tales from the Crypt* #20-2; Directed by Bob Hoskins; airdate: April 19, 1996; *Guest Cast*: Leslie Philips (Mycroft); Natasha Richardson (Fiona Haversham); James Saxon (Evelyn); Greg Wise (Justin); Bob Hoskins.

A dying English lord enlists his lawyer, Fiona, to help him disinherit his two good-for-nothing sons. A new codicil is added to his will: for the boys to inherit any money, they must first locate their long-lost third brother ... who went missing some fifteen years earlier. The lawyer succeeds in offing each of the two sons and then reveals a surprise of her own.

**82. “Last Respects”** Written by Scott Nimerfro; From *Tales from the Crypt* #23-2; Directed by Freddie Francis; airdate: April 26, 1996; *Guest Cast*: Emma Samms (Lavonne); Kerry Fox (Dolores); Julie Cox (Marlys); Michael Denison, Dulcie Gray.

Three sisters discover a monkey’s paw which is said to grant the wishes of its owners. The legend is true, but the wishes come true in ways not intended by the sisters.

**83. “A Slight Case of Murder”** Written by A.L. Katz and Gilbert Adler; From *Vault of Horror* #33-3;

Directed by Brian Helgeland; airdate: May 3, 1996; *Guest Cast*: Francesca Annis (Sharon); Elizabeth Spriggs (Mrs. Trask), Chris Cazenove, Patrick Barlow.

A mystery novelist unwittingly becomes a participant in murder when her ex-husband, her next-door neighbor and the neighbor's son all plot against one another.

**84. "Escape"** Written by A.L. Katz and Gilbert Adler; From *Vault of Horror* #16-4; Directed by Peter MacDonald; airdate: May 17, 1996; *Guest Cast*: Martin Kemp, Roy Dotrice, Nickolas Grace, Bill Eston, Nick Redding, Al Hunter-Ashton.

A German officer fighting the second World War finds himself in an English prison camp. His escape plan comes off, with a single hitch.

**85. "Horror in the Night"** Written by John Harrison; From *Vault of Horror* #12-3; Directed by Russell Mulcahy; airdate: May 24, 1996; *Guest Cast*: James Wilby (Nick); Elizabeth McGovern, Roman Vibert, Edward Tudor Pole, Peter Guinness.

A crook who has just double-crossed his partners during a crime finds sanctuary in a hotel room. Mental sanctuary is quite a different thing, however, and the criminal starts to have visions of a woman he doublecrossed years earlier and has now returned for vengeance.

**86. "Cold War"** Written by Scott Nimerfro; From *Tales from the Crypt* #43-2; Directed by Andy Morahan; airdate: May 31, 1996; *Guest Cast*: Ewan McGregor (Ford); Jane Horrocks (Cammy); John Salthouse, Colin Salmon, Willie Ross.

Two down on their luck criminals (and zombies) have tired of their up-and-down relationship and lives of crime. The female, Cammy, takes up with a vampire to enrage her zombie lover, Ford.

**87. "The Kidnapper"** Written by John Harrison and Scott Nimerfro; From *Shock SuspenStories* #12-3; Directed by Jim Spencer; airdate: June 7, 1996; *Guest Cast*: Steve Coogan (Danny Skeggs); Julia Sawalha (Teresa); Tim Stern, Serena Gordon, Matthew Scurfield.

A pawnbroker takes in pitiful Teresa, a young unwed woman who will soon have a baby. Once the baby is born, the pawnbroker reconsiders his kindness and arranges to have the baby kidnapped so that he can be alone with Teresa. When the man tries to get the baby back, he discovers it is easier to give something away than get it back.

**88. "Report from the Grave"** Written and directed by William Malone; From *Vault of Horror* #15-3; airdate: June 14, 1996; *Guest Cast*: James Frain (Elliot); Roger Ashton-Griffths (Tymrak); Siobhan Flynn (Arianne); Jonathan Firth, Gordon Peters, Julian Kerridge.

A gung ho scientist believes he has developed the mechanism through which the living can communicate with the dead. He tests his unusual hypothesis by contacting a famous, now dead, serial killer, but the experiment has disastrous repercussions.

**89. "Smoke Wrings"** Written by Lisa Sandoval; From *Vault of Horror* #34-3; Directed by Mandie Fletcher; airdate: June 21, 1996; *Guest Cast*: Uta Lemper (Jacqueline); Daniel Craig (Barry Manners); Denis Lawson (Frank); Paul Freeman (Alistair Touchstone); Gayle Hunnicutt (Ellen); Tres Hanley,

Chris Stanton.

An advertising executive hires an ex-con who is secretly working to destroy her. He has come up with a cigarette advertising campaign which is a success ... but the secret of his success is most unexpected—a strange device which compels people to do as he wishes.

**90. “About Face”** Written by Larry Wilson, Al Katz and Gilbert Adler; From *Haunt of Fear* #27–1; Directed by Tom Sanders; airdate: June 28, 1996; *Guest Cast*: Anthony Andrews (Jonathan); Anna Friel (Angelica/Leah); Imelda Staunton (Sarah); Paddy Navin, Finty Williams, Emma Bird, Pip Torens, Lane Vidal.

A preacher with an eye for the ladies is reunited with two long-lost daughters, but they are a strange pair: one sister, Angelica, hides the other, Leah, because she is “ugly.” This strange plot comes full-circle when the father realizes he has gained not two daughters, but rather a pair of psychotic Siamese twins.

**91. “Confession”** Written by Scott Nimerfro; From *Shock SuspenStories* #4-2; Directed by Peter Hewitt; airdate: July 5, 1996; *Guest Cast*: Ciaran Hinds (Jack); Eddie Izzard (Warhol Evans); Ashley Artus, Alun Armstrong, John Benfield, Mark Spalding.

A detective thinks he has discovered the identity of a mass murderer who has been severing the heads of women victims all over the city. His suspicion lands on a writer of horror stories, but has he found the wrong man?

**92. “Ear Today ... Gone Tomorrow”** Written by Ed Tapia; From *Tales from the Crypt* #24–1; Directed by Christopher Hart; airdate: July 12, 1996; *Guest Cast*: Richard Johnson (Malcolm); Robert Lindsey (Glynn); Gretchen Palmer (Kate); Phil David, David Gant.

A safecracker with hearing problems is recruited by his partner’s wife to double-cross him. He agrees because he is up to his eyeballs in debt, but later regrets his decision.

**93. “The Third Pig”** Written by Bill Kopp; Directed by Bill Kopp and Pat Ventura; airdate: July 19, 1996; *Guest Cast*: Featuring the voices of: Bobcat Goldwraith, Brad Garrett, Cam Clark, Charlie Adler, Jess Harnell, Cory Burton.

In a special animated episode of *Tales from the Crypt*, the *Three Little Pigs* is retold in macabre fashion. After his two little pig brothers are offed by the big bad wolf, the third little piggy must stand trial in a courtroom populated by those of the lupine persuasion.



## *Twin Peaks* (1990–1991)

### CRITICAL RECEPTION

“miraculously good. It has both the insidious weirdness of Lynch’s best movie work and the weird insidiousness of top-of-the-line TV trash.... This all-American surrealist takes to television like a parasite to an especially nourishing host.”—Terrance Rafferty, *The New Leader*, April 9, 1990, page 86.

“Beautifully written, shot and performed, there is no doubt that the 30 episodes of *Twin Peaks* are among television’s most interesting and compelling aesthetic achievements.”—Robert J. Thompson, *From Hill Street Blues to ER: Television’s Second Golden Age*. The Continuum Publishing Company, 1996, page 155.

“On a medium celebrated for escapism, this show offered viewers the rare chance to flee to a place worse than home. With its depiction of incest and reincarnation, *Twin Peaks* was hiply eerie and dark, to the point of absurdity. After its first episode, the series offered little in way of action as it self-consciously celebrated style over substance with an array of odd shots and dream sequences featuring a dancing dwarf.”—Steven D. Stark, *Glued to the Set: The Sixty Television Shows and Events That Made Us Who We Are Today*, 1997, page 241.

“This is event television given a memorably wicked spin. Nothing like it has ever been seen on network prime time ... Mr. Lynch clearly savors the standard ingredients ... but then the director adds his own peculiar touches, small passing details that suddenly, and often hilariously, thrust the commonplace out of kilter.”—John J. O’Connor, *The New York Times*: “*Twin Peaks*, a Skewed Vision of a Small Town,” Friday, April 6, 1990.

“The often terrifying dream sequences set in a red velvet world where everyone speaks in reverse; Josie Packard’s face trapped, screaming, in a door handle; the omnipresent owl that was to signify a great and horrifying evil: it all added up to one of the scariest programmes ever. Supreme among the terrors ... was the brutal ... murder of Maddie Palmer.... This sequence of staccato images was where we finally discovered who killed Laura Palmer, and the revelation was enough to send a thrill of terror down any spine.”—David Bailey and David Miller, *Cult Times*: “The Scariest Cult TV Ever,” Issue 13, October 1996, page 53.

“a soap opera on acid that soared for one brilliant season and then sank so low that it was virtually unrecognizable. Weird for the sake of weird? You bet. Hilarious? Yes, ma’am.... You’d better catch your breath.”—*Net Trek: Your Guide to Trek Life in Cyberspace*, A Michael Wolff Book, 1995.

### FORMAT

Forget everything you’ve heard about the importance of Laura Palmer, and her murder in the quiet, small town of *Twin Peaks*. Although this death is an important facet of this breakthrough terror TV series, as well as an *entree* to David Lynch’s unique, wacko world, the story of Laura Palmer is only a piece of a much larger puzzle, a ticket into a strange and ... have no doubt ... horrific world.

In the tall, silent woods beyond the northwestern logging town Twin Peaks, an ancient evil dwells. It has lived there for centuries, millennia even. The American Indians who once populated the region were aware of this evil spirit, and they gave a name to its home: the Black Lodge. This domain, perhaps another dimension, or perhaps even another planet, is a vile place which cultivates evil for the sheer enjoyment of it. The door to the Black Lodge can be opened by a planetary alignment, or through the fear of one whom evil hopes to devour. Interestingly, the Black Lodge has a counterpart, a place of pure good called the White Lodge. It is this place, where Gods are rumored to reside, and where nectar falls from the skies like rain, that the United States government (in the late 1980s) attempted to contact using the machinery and infrastructure of the long-closed Project Blue Book, the project which in the '60s searched for evidence of UFOs and extraterrestrial life. The problem is, however, neither the government nor the dark agents at work against our government understand which domain they have truly accessed.

This is the backdrop for the layered *Twin Peaks*, a bizarre soap opera from celebrated film director David Lynch and successful TV producer Mark Frost. Against this domain of evil and strange inhabitants like dancing dwarfs and soft-spoken giants, Lynch plays a tragedy of human proportions. Twin Peaks homecoming queen Laura Palmer (Sheryl Lee) is found murdered one morning, and the investigation of that crime brings F.B.I. agent Dale Cooper (Kyle MacLachlan) to this little logging hamlet. As Cooper delves into the crime with local sheriff Harry S. Truman (Michael Ontkean), he becomes aware that Twin Peaks is not your typical American town. Sure, the cherry pie is terrific and the local diner serves a “damn fine” cup of joe, but there are strange undercurrents of evil everywhere ... as if the town’s proximity to the Black Lodge has somehow infused its inhabitants with evil, or at least a very special brand of darkness. For Laura Palmer was not just the all-American girl she seemed to be on the surface, she was a cocaine-addicted prostitute with a taste for danger and pain.

Among the murder suspects in town are Leo Johnson, a thug who abuses his beautiful wife, Shelly; Josie Packard, a beautiful Asian who owns the local lumber mill and who is hiding a dark secret of her own; Ben Horne, an unscrupulous businessman who will do anything to make a buck, and who has dark sexual interests and tastes which go far beyond the norm; Bobby Briggs, a young high school kid on the make who deals drugs and frames his friends and enemies alike with equal vigor, and even Laura Palmer’s father, Leland, a man given to fits of tears and equally inappropriate spasms of dance.

Strange characters inhabit Twin Peaks with regularity. Other recurring personalities include the Log Lady, a diminutive woman who talks to her log as if it were a lover or confidant; Nadine Hurley, a one-eyed woman who is obsessed with silent curtain runners and later becomes possessed of superhuman strength when she returns to high school; Deputy Andy, a local law enforcement officer who cries uncontrollably at every crime scene; Uncle Jerry Horne, who has an almost sexual enthusiasm for good bread; and Mayor Dwayne Milford, a decrepit politician who has been feuding with his brother, the town newspaperman, for the better part of a century.

A tier below these patented weirdoes are some more recognizable “human” characters. Audrey Horne is the beautiful daughter of Ben Horne, and a girl who is desperate to experience true love. Donna Hayward and James Hurley are two normal high school students who loved Laura Palmer, and who have now found each other in the wake of her death. They are dedicated to solving Laura’s murder, even though this quest for the truth will eventually destroy their relationship. The beautiful Norma Jennings, Miss Twin Peaks twenty years ago, owns the local diner, and she is in love with Ed Hurley, who owns the local gas station. The only problem with this relationship is that Norma is married to a

violent ex-con named Hank, and Ed is married to the certifiable Nadine. And so it goes, with each tier of crazy and not-so-crazy characters interacting with one another on a regular, rotating basis.

What makes this hour-long ABC drama so fascinating (and frequently so scary) is the easy manner in which the show jumps from the pedestrian soap opera subplots (about the burning of the mill, the rigging of a local beauty contest, sexual liaisons and secret identities) to the horrific ones (the search for the Black Lodge, Cooper's egress into a dream world inhabited by a slow-talking midget and a shrieking Laura Palmer) with such aplomb. A principal facet of David Lynch's film work is the thesis that evil, darkness, and the bizarre exist side-by-side with the normal in American suburbia, and *Twin Peaks* features that thematic strand in spades. The show is resolutely horror-oriented in its underlying premise, but some weeks it is indeed more soap than nightmare, more pointed satire than suspense. Still, when *Twin Peaks* decides that horror is its primary component for the week, the program manages to be more terrifying, more frightening in its implications, than just about any program in television history. Simply put, it is a masterpiece of TV drama, and one of the greatest modern horror programs of the last twenty years. The threat of the Black Lodge, and the presence of a maniacal killer from the other world, named Bob of all things, assures that *Twin Peaks* is never far removed from a terrifying place ... a place where reason and goodness cannot compete with an unfathomable evil.

Settings on *Twin Peaks* include Norma's Double R Diner, the Road House (a rough kind of spot on the outskirts of town), the Twin Peaks sheriff's office, the Great Northern Hotel, owned by Ben Horne, and the Packard Mill, a place of intrigue and competing agendas, and of course, those dark woods just outside town.

## HISTORY

David Lynch hardly seems a likely candidate to produce a weekly network TV series. His initial feature film, a black and white cult \$20,000 pic called *Eraserhead* (1977), was so far ahead of its time that it is still not mainstream. *Dune* (1984), his adaptation of the famous Frank Herbert science fiction/environmental bestseller, befuddled audiences who were seeking another *Star Wars* but found instead a layered masterpiece of the bizarre. Still, in 1986, America caught up with David Lynch's skewed filmmaking vision with *Blue Velvet*, a movie about an American lumber town (called Lumberton) which had a dark underside. The film began with star Kyle MacLachlan finding a severed human ear in the grass and progressed duly from that distinctive starting point. The film garnered much critical acclaim because of its overriding visual metaphor, which many reviewers saw as an exposure of hypocritical American life and values. As Roger Ebert (who hated *Blue Velvet*) describes it:

The movie begins with a much-praised sequence in which picket fences and flower beds establish a small-town idyll. Then a man collapses while watering the lawn, and a dog comes to drink from the hose that is still held in his unconscious grip. The great imagery continues as the camera burrows into the green lawn and finds hungry insects beneath—a metaphor for the surface and buried lives of the town.<sup>1</sup>

This moment was choice Lynch, and in many respects, *Blue Velvet* remains his most accomplished film. It is also, without a doubt, the prototype for *Twin Peaks*.

Circa 1987–1990, the American networks were losing their audiences (and ratings) for three significant reasons. For one, big-budget and high-quality syndicated fare such as *Star Trek: The Next*

*Generation*, *Friday the 13th: The Series*, *Freddy's Nightmares*, *War of the Worlds*, *The Untouchables*, and even *Monsters* were siphoning off viewers left and right. Secondly, premium cable television stations for the first time were producing original shows (which nonetheless had highly marketable names) such as HBO's *Tales from the Crypt*, and the USA Network offered extensions of such popular material as *Airwolf*, *Alfred Hitchcock Presents*, *The Hitchhiker*, and *Swamp Thing*. Third, but not least importantly, VCRs were becoming ever more affordable, and the video rental market was booming through chains such as Palmer Video and Blockbuster. To stem this tidal wave migration away from traditional network TV programming, the Big-Three were, after years of rigorous inflexibility, willing to try virtually anything to recapture viewers, even give the "weird" David Lynch a shot. So ABC and David Lynch, auteur of the bizarre, joined forces to create *Twin Peaks*, a soap opera that was weird "chic" and through its very audaciousness would generate massive word-of-mouth and viewer loyalty. Still, ABC had reason to be confident. Lynch's genius was tempered with producer Mark Frost's experience in television production. He had overseen production on NBC's much decorated *Hill Street Blues*, so he could be trusted not to go over budget or too far from the mainstream even as Lynch honed his so-called weird chic to an art form.

Part of *Twin Peaks*' initial charm came from its terrific casting. It mixed seasoned David Lynch veterans such as Kyle MacLachlan (*Dune*, *Blue Velvet*), Everett McGill (*Dune*), and Jack Nance (*Eraserhead*, *Dune*) with *West Side Story* alumni Russ Tamblyn and Richard Beymer. TV graduates such as Peggy Lipton (*The Mod Squad*), David Lander (*Laverne and Shirley*), and Michael Ontkean (*The Rookies*) joined forces with science fiction and horror celebrities such as David Warner (*Tron*, *Time After Time*, *Time Bandits*, *Star Trek V: The Final Frontier*), Tony Jay (Paracelsus of *Beauty and the Beast*) and Carel Struycken (*The Addams Family*, *Star Trek: The Next Generation*). And, lest one underestimate their importance, the cast was packed to the gills with the loveliest young women Hollywood could find. Madchen Amick, Lara Flynn Boyle (recently voted by *TV Guide* to be one of the 16 sexiest people on television), Sherilyn Fenn, Sheryl Lee, and Heather Graham all started on *Twin Peaks*, and then were catapulted to stardom in film and television. Throw Piper Laurie, Joan Chen, David Duchovny, Dan O'Herlihy, and Billy Zane into this eclectic mix (which *Twin Peaks* did) and its casting appeal is immediately apparent.

When the first *Twin Peaks* telemovie, introducing the series, aired in early April of 1990, it promptly became the most-watched TV movie of the year. Earlier, *Connoisseur Magazine*, in September of 1989, called it the series which "would change TV," and the prediction proved accurate. *Twin Peaks* became a bona fide phenomenon, like *Dark Shadows* or the 1966 *Batman* TV series. Everyone in America became obsessed with the question: Who killed Laura Palmer? It was right up there with "Who shot J.R.?" but even more interesting. The series premiere not only generated an incredible 21.7 share (35 percent of the audience), but soon bootleg copies of *Twin Peaks* were selling on the black market for \$20.00!<sup>2</sup> Success was in the air, and *Twin Peaks* was nominated for 14 Emmy Awards. In the end, it won only two such awards (for best costume design and best film editing), and David Lynch lost the "best director" award to Thomas Carter of *Equal Justice* and Scott Winant of *Thirtysomething*, but the phenomenon was still going strong. David Lynch was featured on the cover of *Time* magazine, *The Secret Diary of Laura Palmer* raced to the top of *The New York Times* best seller list, "Twin Beaks" appeared as a parody on *Sesame Street*, the *Twin Peaks* fan group numbered at 11,000 members, and the show aired in over 55 foreign markets. As producer Mark Frost told *Time*:

We were in exactly the right place at the right network, at the right time. The end of the Reagan era, a new decade, there were a lot of pointers.<sup>3</sup>

These pointers led to a complex series which saw the hourly television drama not primarily as commerce, but as art. What made *Twin Peaks* instantly appealing to so many viewers was not only its central mystery, but the fact that it was filled with puzzling dreams, symbols, and portents. Deciphering these symbols became a national pastime and a boon for TV and film critics alike. As for Lynch and Frost, they were virtually sideswiped by the breadth of *Twin Peaks*' popularity. Mark Frost described the method by which he and Lynch had created the program, but even that could not explain the series' massive and seemingly universal popularity:

We developed the town before the people ... We drew a map. We knew it had a lumber mill.... We started with this image of a body washing up on a lake. It took us a while to solve the murder. We had to know the town before we could make up a list of suspects. Only after we knew most of its people was the killer revealed to us.<sup>4</sup>

David Lynch actually ruffled some intellectual feathers when he came right out, in his typically unassuming and humble fashion, to debate critics who had found so much meaning in his new TV series. Although books would be written on the subject (*Full of Secrets: Critical Approaches to Twin Peaks* edited by David Lavery) and *Film Quarterly* would devote an entire issue to a study of the series, Lynch noted that not everything was orchestrated. As he said of the bizarre characters such as the Log Lady and Nadine:

I'm not sure why they do those things or what they mean. They just popped into my head and sort of stuck. It's like fishing. When you catch something, you never know what will come up.<sup>5</sup>

Perhaps some viewers began to sense that there was more style than real meaning in *Twin Peaks*, and by the end of the first season, ratings began to slide. The Laura Palmer mystery was finally solved, but David Lynch's propensity towards weirdness presented what was essentially a resolution with no sense of closure. Worse, the next subplot to be featured on *Twin Peaks*, one concerning the Black Lodge and a villain called Windom Earle, was not well-liked by viewers, even though it was considerably more horrific and ambitious than the Laura Palmer subplot which had captured so many viewers in the first place. Although the show remained popular, and was supported by a dedicated cult, the slide continued. ABC moved the show to Saturday nights during the second season, but that was the nail in the coffin. The last regularly scheduled episode of *Twin Peaks* brought in only eight million viewers, quite a drop from the previous season. In response, ABC yanked the show from its regular run, and then brought it back for a "final" two-hour film (actually the last two episodes of the series). On June 12, 1991, *Twin Peaks* aired for the last time, and its ratings were miserable. It garnered only a 6.7 rating, falling well behind CBS and NBC, which aired, respectively, *Northern Exposure* and an NBC original movie. The last episode of *Twin Peaks*, in typical Lynch fashion, was no resolution at all, but a broadening of the overall mystery which saw Dale Cooper travel to the Black Lodge only to become possessed by the evil spirit Bob, who had murdered Laura Palmer.

However, as with all cults, the *Twin Peaks* story was far from over. *Twin Peaks* became a huge cult sensation in Japan, where 15,000 sets of series videotapes promptly sold, and 7,000 sets of videodiscs to boot. Fans were primarily women in their early 30s, according to reports. The series became so popular in Japan that the Japan Travel Bureau soon began organizing tours to Snoqualmie, Washington, the U.S. region where the series had been shot.<sup>6</sup> At one point in 1992, more than six tour groups of 300 people each were bound for Snoqualmie. Then, came the next big thing: David Lynch directed a prequel to *Twin Peaks* called *Fire Walk with Me*, which dramatized the last night of Laura

Palmer's life. The film was met with savage reviews, and even more savage box office ... but it was popular in Japan. There Laura Palmer's funeral was arranged as a publicity stunt for the opening of the film, which in Japan was called *The Last Seven Days of Laura Palmer*.<sup>7</sup>

Though the *Twin Peaks* phenomenon faded by 1993, television drama was forever changed. Immediately after *Twin Peaks* began its two-year run, networks began courting film personalities to bring their own "weirdness" to the tube. Wes Craven was lured to television for *Nightmare Cafe*, as was Stephen King for *The Golden Years*. NBC revived *Dark Shadows*, hoping that the soap-opera formula of *Twin Peaks* had primed viewers for a second go with the Gothic goings on at Collinwood. Shows such as *Northern Exposure* (which had the audacity to feature a waitress named Shelly), *Due South*, and even *The X-Files* were soon incorporating "quirky" characters and non-linear stories in an attempt to build on *Twin Peaks*' considerable success. For these reasons, *Twin Peaks* is not only one of the best dramatic shows on TV (in or out of the horror genre) but also one of the most influential. As for David Lynch, his career has soured somewhat in recent years. His 1997 feature, *Lost Highway*, met with bad reviews (which he trumpeted in an amusing anti-critic ad) and lackluster box office.

Despite *Twin Peaks*' death after just a season-and-a-half, it remains (arguably) the crowning achievement of David Lynch's career. Perhaps the following remark by Jay Rosen, research fellow at the Gannet Foundation Media Center at Columbia University best remembers what *Twin Peaks* (and Lynch) managed to accomplish with so distinctive a voice:

He [Lynch] and the show seemed to be a fugitive presence within the world of television. It's similar to what David Letterman accomplished when he first went on. We felt that he was one of us, that a hip, savvy guy who knew how awful TV was had finally made it on the air. That is a very powerful message.<sup>8</sup>

For inspiring and empowering television artists around the world, *Twin Peaks* deserves to be remembered as a "damn fine" TV venture.

## CRITICAL COMMENTARY

The critical community's seemingly undying fascination with David Lynch and Mark Frost's *Twin Peaks* stems from the undeniable fact that the series represents so many things to so many different audiences. With its subplots about ownership of the Packard Mill, the sale of Ghostwood Estates, and the various sexual couplings and uncouplings of its dramatis personae, *Twin Peaks* is clearly a descendent of every soap opera from *Peyton Place* up to (and through) *Dynasty*, *Knots Landing*, and *Dallas*. As *Twin Peaks* also focuses heavily on the underside of a seemingly perfect American town, the series might also be legitimately examined as an extension of Lynch's film oeuvre. This connection is enhanced considering how deeply *Twin Peaks* mirrors the abusive-boyfriend/victimized woman/young lover triangle of *Blue Velvet*. In *Blue Velvet*, it was Kyle MacLachlan who became involved with Dennis Hopper's love slave, Isabella Rossellini. In *Peaks*, Shelly Johnson is victimized by the abusive Leo Johnson as lover Billy Briggs watches. The same dynamic is played out in the Evelyn Marsh/Jeffrey Marsh/James Hurley subplot, and to some extent even in the Norma/Hank/Ed relationship. It is obvious then, that sexual victimization, infidelity, and love triangles are a critical part of Lynch's auteuristic vision, and one might even make the claim that the Laura Palmer/James Hurley/Donna Hayward relationship is a triangle of abuse and victimization, even though Laura is deceased as the series commences.

If all of this is too deep or complex for one to consider, it is possible also to view *Twin Peaks* as nothing more and nothing less than a send-up of soap opera form and conventions. Referencing and mirroring the events in his own fictional town, Lynch (in the early episodes) frequently shows clips of a daytime drama called *Invitation to Love*. Through this overtly sophomoric fictional series, *Twin Peaks* is clearly satirizing soap opera format and tradition. Soap opera contrivances (such as Laura's look-alike cousin Mattie, played by the same actress, and Lucy's mysterious pregnancy) figure prominently enough for even the casual viewer to be "in" on the joke. This self-referential quality extends beyond the realm of the soap opera as well, to TV as a whole. An important character in *Twin Peaks* is the one-armed man. As all TV viewers are aware, David Janssen spent four years chasing down a one-armed man on *The Fugitive*. To further cement this association, the one-armed man in *Twin Peaks* is named Gerard, after Barry Morse's character in *The Fugitive*! So, there is plenty here for critics to contemplate, especially when one also factors in all the weird symbols and imagery, such as the dancing dwarf or the quiet giant. It is no exaggeration to state that *Twin Peaks* makes *Last Year at Marienbad* look transparent by comparison, and critics (this one included) are frequently suckers for productions which are not immediately and easily comprehended. It makes us all feel smart to think of "the right answer" when the production leaves such a deep, wide vacuum in reason and motivation as aftertaste.

For the purposes of this text, however, *Twin Peaks* is to be viewed almost entirely as a horror show because, at face value anyway, it deals with the nature of evil. Granted, there are no vampires, no mummies, and no alien beings bent on world domination, but the villain of *Twin Peaks* is an ancient evil spirit, an immortal thing called Bob. Surely, this is a reference in some manner to Lovecraft, who also wrote of an ancient evil with an interest in the human world. Once the connection to Lovecraft and the nature of Bob is revealed, it is not a stretch at all to view *Twin Peaks* as an offspring of the horror genre, and in this case, it seems illuminating to do so.

"It's a pretty simple town ... it used to be." Harry Truman states in one episode of *Twin Peaks*, and his promptly corrected remark summarizes this series' approach to horror. Beyond any discussion of evil spirits or a hellish other dimension called "the Black Lodge," *Twin Peaks* is most certainly a reflection of the unpleasant truth that there is no place in modern America which is safe from the corrupting influence of evil. Since *Twin Peaks*' reign on TV in the early nineties, viewers have seen this idea reinforced not only in our entertainment (such as *The X-Files*, *Millennium*, and *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*) but, dauntingly, in reality. A black man is dragged to his death in the little town of Jasper, a little boy with an angelic faces goes on a shooting spree in quiet Jonesboro, a gay man is murdered for no reason in Wisconsin, and so forth. Evil, which Americans once naively assumed was limited to poor urban areas, has reached and infected the heartland and the backwoods of our nation. The discovery of Laura Palmer's body in tranquil Twin Peaks is thus nothing less than a prophecy of American life in the 1990s. This event, this murder, opens the town (and America) up to the fact that there are dark secrets, dark acts, in every corner of what many once assumed was a wholesome, good land.

*Twin Peaks* reaches back further than David Lynch's subversive view of America and further back than the H.P. Lovecraft notion that an age-old evil sits at our doorstep, ready to be invited in. It generates its overall mood of horror and fear by invoking a bit of Nathaniel Hawthorne's gothic world. Hawthorne frequently wrote of a virgin America where the forests were inhabited by things both inhuman and markedly less-than-human. It was the devil, a spirit, evil incarnate, call-it-what-you-will, but Hawthorne imagined that it existed in the dark, in the woods, perhaps because the America of his

generation was such a question-mark, a mystery dominated by Native American myths and fears. Additionally, Hawthorne wove his ghost stories such as *The House of Seven Gables* around symbols ... a key element to an understanding of *Twin Peaks*. In an afterword to *House of Seven Gables*, literary critic and managing editor of *American Literature* Cathy N. Davidson writes about Hawthorne's use of symbols. Imagine, for just an instant, that she is writing about David Lynch and *Twin Peaks*, and it is not hard to see where many of *Twin Peaks*' notions and concepts grow from:

... what is most distinctive about his [Hawthorne's] fiction is not his plot ... but his attentiveness to how we come to know something, and his virtual obsession with charting the differences between literal or legalistic meaning ... and the symbolic meaning.... Everywhere in the book there are signs that require readings, but readings that change as the unfolding plot provides new interpretative keys.<sup>9</sup>

Indeed, *Twin Peaks* appears to be about Laura Palmer's death, and the search for her murderer, but the series is not truly interested in this "legalistic" meaning, but in the motives and ideas that surround this important death. These ideas (which lead to the horror of the Black Lodge) are presented cogently in symbols (dreams, psychic visions, portents, images of dwarves, other dimensions, giants, dancing singers, velvet rooms, elongated and nonsensical speech, and such). Furthermore, these images and dreams mean different things at different times during the *Twin Peaks* series roster. "The next time you see me, I will not be me," the mysterious dwarf warns at one point, indicating how symbols and images change meaning as Cooper (and *Twin Peaks*' audience) learns more about what is "really" happening in a larger, and far more terrifying reality. Consider the scar on Major Briggs' neck. At first it means one thing: a tattoo given, perhaps, by aliens. Yet, when combined with the scar on the Log Lady's body, it means something else, and leads at last to the mystery at the Owl Cave. And what of the owls? At first, the owl seems to be the creature, the host, that Bob has fled into as an escape. As the series climaxes, however, the viewer learns that owls mean much more, and that they represent the inhabitants at the Black Lodge. Then, when watching the show again, one can see how owls are present at virtually every important story junction (Cooper sees one as Briggs vanishes; Briggs sees a giant owl that masks the memory of his abduction; Bob seems to turn into an owl; an owl guards the Black Lodge; an owl watches outside Shelly's house as she is terrorized by Leo, etcetera).

The belief that in America's forests there is an everlasting evil, or at least mystery, is not a concept exclusive to Hawthorne either. One might also read Charles Brockden Brown's *Wieland: A Transformation* to see how mechanisms of an unknown force can evoke feelings of terror and fear. In the following passage from *Wieland*, a paranormal event or "abduction" is described, one that may be the first of such events included in early American literature. As the passage is read, please imagine, again, that it speaks of the Laura Palmer mystery, and the forest of *Twin Peaks*:

... he beheld what he could no better describe than by saying it resembled a cloud impregnated with light. It had the brightness of flame, but was without its upward motion. It did not occupy the whole area, but rose but a few feet.... Fear and wonder rendered him powerless.... An occurrence like this ... as adapted to intimidate the stoutest heart.... His right arm exhibited marks as having been struck by some heavy body. His clothes had been removed ... they were reduced to ashes.<sup>10</sup>

This long-held fear that something evil and mysterious survives in the forest is translated to *Twin Peaks*. From out of the woods, Laura Palmer's body appears, wrapped in plastic. From out of the



woods comes a blast of white light, and suddenly Major Briggs is gone, vanished. From out of the woods, Ronette Pulaski stumbles, with no memory of where she was or what happened to her. And on some especially fearsome nights, in a circle of twelve old sycamore trees, something monstrous comes out of the woods, one limb at a time, something which revels in its own evil.

The fear of the forest is so overwhelming in *Twin Peaks* that it has been incorporated into the town's infrastructure. As early as the second show, Harry tells Cooper that "there's something evil in the woods," a presence which he says takes many forms. He then goes on to report that there is a secret society, "the Bookhouse Boys" which protects the town against this force. In another story, episode #5, the Log Lady warns that her deceased husband, a logger, met the devil in the form of fire the day after he was married to her. The clues about the true nature of the forest just roll in, one after the other, indicating that it is a site of evil or at least otherworldliness.

Finally, in the last episode of the show, Windom Earle finds the door to the Black Lodge in the circle of sycamores. So *Twin Peaks* is, in subtle fashion, following a long tradition of horror myths which establish forests as a place of the supernatural. And, let's face it, man is afraid of the forest. It has a life of its own, a history of its own. It was here before man, and it will be here after man, assuming we do not destroy it first. That is the trigger, perhaps of *Twin Peaks*, a genetic memory of something terrible and frightening just beyond our own campfire. The dark woods are part of our subconscious, and *Twin Peaks* makes them an overt part of its terror. Recently, *The Blair Witch Project* drew from the same source material, positing a deep, seemingly invisible evil, which attacks by night in America's darkest woods.

Though technically a police procedural, *Twin Peaks* has mastered the lexicon of the supernatural drama. Laura is tellingly referred to as a "restless spirit" after her death, and Deputy Hawk wonders if she has become a "dream soul," one of those unfortunates who wanders the land of the dead for all eternity. In another revelation, Laura's diary states that she felt as if she was being "pulled down to hell." These references are not random, but quite purposeful in that they conjure a supernatural or horrific image. They all serve to indicate that the landscape of *Twin Peaks* is not just a police mystery, but out-and-out horror which climaxes in terrifying human contact with another, very frightening world. Others feel this "pull" of the dark nearby as well. Donna Hayward states she is having a "beautiful dream" and a "terrible nightmare" all at once. Ben Horne remarks that "sometimes the urge to do bad is nearly overpowering," and so on. These are reminders that evil is a part of everyday life in the town of Twin Peaks, and that this unique series can easily and rightfully be interpreted as horror.

Horror imagery is everywhere in *Twin Peaks*. Laura Palmer's mother is psychic, and she experiences a terrible vision of her daughter's killer. In slow motion, we see the Palmer foyer, a hallway and stairs. We travel ever so slowly into Laura's room, and we just barely detect something *wrong*. It is there, at the very corner of our perception, in the space between a blink and an open eye. There is somebody, a malevolent somebody, perched in the corner of the room ... just beyond the bed frame. This thing is Bob. Still, silent, and filled with menace, he sits and he watches us watching him. It is a real glimpse of something evil tucked in neatly amid the normal; it is absolutely unforgettable and absolutely horrifying all at once.

Cooper's final ascension (or more appropriately, descent) into the Black Lodge is also a terrifying coda, a pinnacle perhaps of horror imagery on television. Cooper finds himself in the red velvet room of his dreams. The floor is a zig-zag tile pattern, and the curtains to the other rooms (paradoxically the *same* room) seem to stretch for eternity. The light in the room begins to strobe, and Cooper is

unexpectedly faced with a cacophony of terrors which include a maniacal, shrieking Laura Palmer, the insane Bob, and a frightening Cooper doppelganger with dead white eyes. The zig-zag tiles on the floor are superimposed over those images, and for a moment the viewer believes he is the only witness to a world of madness, of complete and utter collapse of reason. The terror of the Black Lodge is truly that reason, rationality, and humanity are absent there. It is a realm of insanity populated solely by the insane and deformed. And it's a maze to boot, with no way out ... and shrieking banshees on all sides.

This is the ultimate horror of *Twin Peaks*, a descent into total chaos and madness from which there is no reprieve, no escape. This is different from the horror of vampires, demons, aliens, and sewer fluke men, but it is horror at its best and most vividly imagined. It is a metaphysical kind of formless terror which in many ways is more frightening than anything seen on TV before or since because it is so insidious and enigmatic. This evil gets inside you and it changes you. It destroys you from within and exposes you to madness, paralysis, the loss of reason, stability, and everything else that makes us human. It is a chilling conclusion to *Twin Peaks*, and as effective a dose of horror imagery as one is likely to see on the small screen.

Yes, there is much more to *Twin Peaks* than its brilliant, off-kilter look into the eyes of fear and terror. For one thing, it is a show which posits a weird addictive relationship between man and food (particularly cherry pie and donuts). And yes, perhaps the series is self-indulgent at times, yet it is always powerful, always compelling, and always filled with secrets and mysteries. Who is the dwarf? Who is the giant? What does Bob represent? Why does Laura say that she will see Cooper again in twenty-five years? Is that how long it will take him to shake off Bob's influence and return to sanity? What does the final, terrifying journey through the Black Lodge tell us about ourselves and human nature? *Twin Peaks* artfully raises all the right questions, but like the best films and the best works of art, it is up to the individual viewer to find the answers, to interpret those answers, and determine which answers fit best.

There are two myths about *Twin Peaks* that deserve to be dispelled. The first is that the show got worse as it went along, becoming self-indulgent and terrible. The fact of the matter is this: the show actually got better after Laura Palmer's murder was solved, because the new plot involving Windom Earle and the Black Lodge enabled Frost and Lynch to expand on their vision of a dark world existing side-by-side with a beautiful one. As for the series being self-indulgent, it was *always* self-indulgent to a degree, so this was not a change that just plagued the second season. Secondly, people have complained for years that *Twin Peaks* is too insular, that if a person misses one episode, the entire experience is soured because it is impossible to get back into the flow of the story. Today, that argument no longer seems as powerful as it did in 1992, perhaps because *Babylon 5*, *The X-Files*, *Millennium*, *Murder One*, and other series have followed in *Twin Peaks*' footsteps and presented multi-season, multi-episode storylines which require a high degree of concentration and memory. If anything, *Twin Peaks* was ahead of its time in that it trained the American audience to sit up and pay attention to details. That training has proven critical to an enjoyment of *The X-Files* and other currently in-vogue horror series such as *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* and, in particular, *Millennium*. In some senses, *Twin Peaks* might have seemed more cohesive (and it remains remarkably cohesive) to some complainers if it had been on every day, instead of just once a week. When watched on video today, each episode leads to the other with fluid continuity, a fact which may not have been easily noticeably with a week hiatus time between airings.

An incredible visual and intellectual experience, and a dark vision of unparalleled invention, *Twin*

*Peaks* is certainly among the top five horror TV programs of all time (before or after 1970). Go out and rent it. Now.

## CAST AND CREDITS

*Cast:* Kyle MacLachlan (Special Agent Dale Cooper, F.B.I.); Michael Ontkean (Sheriff Harry S. Truman).

*Supporting Cast (in alphabetical order):* Madchen Amick (Shelly Johnson); Dana Ashbrook (Bobby Briggs); Richard Beymer (Ben Horne); Ian Buchanan (Richard Tremayne); Joan Chen (Jocelyn "Josie" Packard); Catherine Coulson (Log Lady); Eric Da Rae (Leo Johnson); Don Davis (Major Briggs); Mary Jo Deschanel (Eileen Hayward); Sherilyn Fenn (Audrey Horne); Lara Flynn Boyle (Donna Hayward); Warren Frost (Dr. Will Hayward); Harry Goaz (Deputy Andy); Gary Hershberger (Mike Nelson); Michael Horse (Deputy Hawk); Piper Laurie (Catherine Martell); Sheryl Lee (Laura Palmer/Madelaine Ferguson); Peggy Lipton (Norma Jennings); James Marshall (James Hurley); Everett McGill (Ed Hurley); Chris Mulkey (Hank Jennings); Jack Nance (Pete Martell); Kimmy Robertson (Lucy Moran); Wendy Robie (Nadine Hurley); Charlotte Stewart (Betty Briggs); Russ Tamblyn (Dr. Jacoby); Kenneth Walsh (Windom Earle); Ray Wise (Leland Palmer); Grace Zabriskie (Sarah Palmer);

*Credits:* *Created by:* Mark Frost and David Lynch. *Produced by:* Gregg Fienberg. *Executive Producers:* Mark Frost and David Lynch. *Associate Producer:* Philip Neel. *Director of Photography (various episodes):* Frank Byers. *Production Designer:* Richard Hoover. *Editor (various episodes):* Toni P. Morgan, Jonathan P. Shaw. *Original and Series Casting:* Johanna Ray. *Production Manager:* Gregg Fienberg. *Unit Production Manager:* Robert D. Simon. *First Assistant Director:* Scott Cameron. *Second Assistant Director:* Christopher T. Gerrety, Deepak Nayar. *Production Supervisor:* Tim Harbert. *First Assistant Camera:* Rudy Fenengar, Jr. *Second Assistant Camera:* Beth Cotter. *Art Director:* Okowita. *Set Decorator:* Brian Kasch. *Construction Coordinator:* Keith Cox. *Property Master:* Clarence Quitan. *Costume Designer:* Sara Markowitz. *Costume Supervisor:* Laurie L. Hadson. *Makeup:* Carla Roseto Fabrizi. *Hair:* Annette E. Fabrizi. *Makeup/Hair Assistant:* Linda A. Vellejo. *Gaffer:* Robert Ferrara. *Key Grip:* Joseph A. Kelly. *Sound Mixer:* Walter Hoylman. *Boom Operator:* Walter-Charles Gorez. *Transportation Coordinator:* Steve Boyd. *Transportation Captain:* Greg Van Dyke. *Location Manager:* Steve Share. *Casting Assistant:* Elaine J. Huzzar. *Script Supervisor:* Judi Townsend. *Production Controller:* Nowell B. Grossman. *Production Coordinator:* Joseph Montrone. *Production Secretary:* Lori Tulli-Mitchell. *Orchestrations:* Angelo Badalementi. *Assistant to Mark Frost:* Paula K. Shimatsu-U. *Assistant to David Lynch:* Debby Trutnik. *Assistant to Gregg Fienberg:* Suzanne Hargrove. *Supervising Sound Editor:* John Larsen. *Music Editor:* Lori L. Eschler. *Assistant Editor:* John Refoua. *Apprentice Editor:* Alison M. Howard. *Rerecording Mixers:* Gary Alexander, Jim Fitzpatrick, Adam Jenkins. *Wardrobe:* The Greif Companies, Shepiers. *Extras Casting:* Superior Casting. *Titles and Opticals:* Pacific Title. *Color:* De Luxe. *Telecine and Electronic Postproduction:* Todd-AO/Glenn-Glenn Studios. In Association with Propaganda Films, Spelling Entertainment Inc., and Lynch/Frost Productions.

## EPISODE GUIDE

### • *First Season (1990)*

**1. "Episode 1" (two hours)** Written by Mark Frost and David Lynch; Directed by David Lynch;

airdate: April 8, 1990; *Guest Cast*: Troy Evans (George Wolchek); John Boylan (Dwayne Milford); Rodney Harvey (Biker Scotty); Robert Davenport (Johnny Horne); Jan D'Arcy (Sylvia Horne); Jessica Wallenfels (Harriet Hayward); Phoebe Augustine (Ronette Pulaski); Brett Vadset (Joey); Frank Silva (Bob); Michael J. Anderson (Man from Another Place); David Wasman (Gilman White); Jane Jones (Margaret Honeycutt); Tawnya Pettiford-Waites (Dr. Shelvy); Shelly Henning (Alice Brady); Dorothy Roberts (Mrs. Jackson); Julee Cruise (Girl Singer); Arnie Stenseth (Sven Jorgenson); Andrea Hays (Heidi); Rick Tutor (Janek Pulaski); Marjorie Nelson (Janice Horgan); Ben DiGregario (Max Hartman); Diane Caldwell (Hotel Employee); Al Strobel (One-Armed Man).

In sleepy Twin Peaks on February 24th, seventeen-year-old homecoming queen Laura Palmer is found murdered on a rocky beach, wrapped in a plastic bag. Her grief-stricken father, Leland, identifies her body while the town sheriff, Harry S. Truman, arrests Bobby, Laura's volatile boyfriend. When another local girl, Ronette Pulaski, goes missing and then shows up later, comatose and in shock, Twin Peaks grinds to a halt, and even the saw mill owned by Jocelyn Packard is closed. F.B.I. agent Dale Cooper, a fastidious man with an obsessive eye for detail, arrives in town to investigate the crimes, and soon finds a small letter "R" behind one of Laura's fingernails. Cooper reads Laura's secret diary, releases Bobby from custody, and then interrogates Laura's best friend, Donna Hayward. Videotape evidence soon suggests that Laura and Donna were both involved with a biker whose first name starts with the letter "J." Cooper announces to the town that a year ago to the day that Laura Palmer was murdered, a girl named Theresa Banks died under similar circumstances in another town.

**2. "Episode 2"** Written by Mark Frost and David Lynch; Directed by Duwayne Dunham; airdate: April 12, 1990; *Guest Cast*: Alan Ogle (Janek Pulaski); Michele Milantoni (Suburbis Pulaski); Jill Rogosheske (Trudy); Al Strobel (One-Armed Man).

Cooper meets the sultry Audrey Horne, even as James Hurley, the biker whose name starts with "J," is questioned in custody. The postmortem comes back on Laura Palmer, revealing that she had bite marks on her shoulder and tongue, and that she had sex with at least three different men during the last twelve hours of her life. James is released from prison, as is Bobby, who owes Leo Johnson, a thug and wife-abuser, ten thousand dollars. Catherine Martell, former owner of the saw mill, plots to ruin Jocelyn and burn down the plant, as Donna realizes that she has developed romantic feelings for James.

**3. "Episode 3"** Written by Mark Frost and David Lynch; Directed by David Lynch; airdate: April 19, 1990; *Guest Cast*: David Patrick Kelly (Uncle Jerry); Miguel Ferrer (Albert Rosenfield); Jan D'Arcy (Sylvia Horne); Victoria Catlin (Blackie); Michael J. Anderson (Man from Another Place); Robert Bauer (Johnny Horne); Kim Lentze (Bartender); Frank Silva (Killer Bob); Charlie Spradling (Swabbie); Al Strobel (One-Armed Man).

Audrey Horne's uncle Jerry returns from Europe (with great bread) and visits One-Eyed Jack's, a local brothel, with her father. Donna and James' relationship intensifies while Bobby attempts to pay off Leo, and continues to have a secret affair with Leo's wife, Shelly. Agent Cooper utilizes a bizarre strategy (which was revealed to him in a dream) to pinpoint suspects, and he comes up with two interesting possibilities: Leo Johnson, who has a long criminal record, and Dr. Jacoby, Laura's insensitive psychiatrist.

**4. "Episode 4"** Written by Harley Peyton; Directed by Tina Rathbone; airdate: April 26, 1990; *Guest Cast*: Miguel Ferrer (Albert Rosenfield); Royce D. Applegate (Reverend); Robert Bauer (Johnny

Horne); Jill Rogosheske (Trudy); Brett Vadset (Joey Paulson); Clay Wilcox (Bernard Renault); Jed Mills, Walter Olkewicz (Jacque Renault); *Invitation to Love* cast: Erika Anderson (Emerald/Jade), Lance Davis (Chet).

Cooper has had a bizarre dream about a crimson-suited dwarf, and a red sitting room, and now he believes he knows who killed Laura Palmer. The solution is locked in his dream, so first he must decipher it and its symbols, which include a Laura-look-alike whose arms “sometimes bend backwards” and other bizarre things. Cooper questions Leo Johnson about his whereabouts on the night of Laura’s murder, only to meet with recalcitrance, and the town finally gathers for Laura Palmer’s funeral. At the ceremony, Bobby accuses the town of apathy and blames all the citizens for Laura’s death, and later Sheriff Truman introduces Cooper to a secret society sworn to protect Twin Peaks from an evil presence which lurks in the forest.

**5. “Episode 5”** Written by Robert Engels; Directed by Tim Hunter; airdate: May 3, 1990; *Guest Cast:* Mary Bond Davis (Female Parole Board Member #1); Mary Chalon (Female Parole Board Member #2); James Craven (Male Parole Board Officer); Adele Gilbert (Midge Loomer); Al Strobel (One-Armed Man/Gerard); *Invitation to Love* cast: Erika Anderson (Emerald); Lance Davis (Chet).

Cooper and Truman interrogate Dr. Jacoby while Deputy Hawk tracks down the mysterious One-Armed Man, who claims to be a friend of Bob ... the man whom Cooper suspects murdered Laura Palmer. Meanwhile, Hank Jennings (Norma’s husband) is released from prison on parole, jeopardizing Norma’s secret relationship with Ed Hurley. Cooper busts a veterinarian’s office when he suspects that a resident’s pet myna bird pecked Laura before she expired. Donna and James become upset when Mrs. Palmer has a vision that the necklace the teens buried together in the dirt has been unearthed.

**6. “Episode 6”** Written by Mark Frost; Directed by Lesli Linka Glatter; airdate: May 10, 1990; *Guest Cast:* David Patrick Kelly (Jerry Horne); Don Amendolia (Emory Battis); Jill Rogosheske (Trudy); Brian Straub (Einar Thorson); Mary Stavin (Heba); *Invitation to Love* cast: Lance Davis (Chet); Rick Giolito (Montana); Peter Michael Goetz (Jared).

Cooper is awakened at 4:28 A.M. by visiting Icelanders at the Great Northern Inn, and Audrey Horne makes another pass at him over morning coffee. Sheriff Truman and Cooper examine Jacque Renault’s apartment and find two important clues: a bloody shirt belonging to Leo Johnson, and another copy of the porn magazine *Flesh World*. Meanwhile, Norma and Ed call off their relationship, and Bobby and Shelly continue their affair. James reveals to Donna that his mother is an alcoholic sex-addict, and Cooper identifies Laura Palmer in a *Flesh World* sex ad by the red drapes he has seen in his dreams.

**7. “Episode 7”** Written by Harley Peyton; Directed by Caleb Deschanel; airdate: May 17, 1990; *Guest Cast:* Don Amendolia (Emory Battis); Eve Brent (Theodora); Lisa Ann Cabasa (Jenny); Mary Stavin (Heba); Brian Straub (Einar Thorson); Mark Lowenthal (Mr. Neff); Victoria Catlin (Blackie); Walter Olkewicz (Jacque Renault); *Invitation to Love* cast: Erika Anderson (Jade); Lance Davis (Chet); Rick Giolito (Montana).

Shelly has shot Leo in self-defense upon his return home, and Cooper has retired for the evening to discover Audrey Horne waiting for him in bed ... nude. Meanwhile, a still-living Leo has murdered the myna bird Waldo to prevent the animal from incriminating him in Laura Palmer’s death. Under the assumed name of Esther, Audrey Horne begins working as a prostitute at One-Eyed Jack’s.

**8. “Episode 8”** Written and directed by Mark Frost; airdate: May 23, 1990; *Guest Cast*: Walter Olkewicz (Jacque Renault); Victoria Catlin (Blackie); Charles Hoyes (Decker); Brian Straub (Einar Thorson); *Invitation to Love* cast: Erika Anderson (Jade); Lance Davis (Chet); Rick Giolito (Montana).

Donna and James explore Dr. Jacoby’s office looking for clues about Laura’s death while Mattie Ferguson, Laura’s look-alike cousin, distracts him and pretends to be Laura. Cooper infiltrates One-Eyed Jack’s and contacts Jacques Renault, who makes several incriminating statements about Laura and the night she died. An angry Leo captures Shelly and plans to murder her in the destruction of the saw mill, which he has also arranged. Soon, events in Twin Peaks escalate to a fever pitch: Nadine attempts to kill herself with an overdose of pills, Bobby frames James for cocaine possession, Leo attempts to murder Bobby with an axe, Lucy announces she is pregnant with Andy’s baby, and Cooper returns to his hotel room only to be shot by a mysterious stranger.

*Note*: This episode, the last of the first season, ends on a cliffhanger.

• *Second Season (1990–1991)*

**9. “Episode 9” (two hours)** Written by Mark Frost; From a story by David Lynch and Mark Frost; directed by David Lynch; airdate: September 30, 1990; *Guest Cast*: Alicia Witt (Kirsten Hayward); Frank Silva (Killer Bob); Charles Miller (Doctor); Al Strobel (One-Armed Man); Carel Struycken (Giant); Jessica Wallenfalls (Harriet Hayward); Victoria Catlin (Blackie); Phoebe Augustine (Ronette Pulaski); Miguel Ferrer (Albert); Sandra Wetzel (Nurse); Hank Worden (Waiter); Mak Takano (Jonathan Lee).

As he lies on the floor of his hotel room, shot, Cooper has a vision of a giant who provides him three clues into the death of Laura Palmer. Meanwhile, Laura Palmer’s look-alike, Madelaine Ferguson, learns about “Bob” from Sarah Palmer, Laura’s mother, and Leland Palmer’s hair inexplicably goes stark white. Audrey Horne, working undercover at One-Eyed Jack’s, is spared a potentially embarrassing experience when her first client, her father, is called away on business. Cooper has survived his attack, because he was wearing a bulletproof vest, and he now stands ready to question Ronette Pulaski, who has finally come out of her catatonic state.

**10. “Episode 10”** Written by Harley Peyton; Directed by David Lynch; airdate: October 6, 1990; *Guest Cast*: Don Amendolia (Emory Battis); Austin Jack Lynch (Pierre Tremond); Mak Takano (Jonathan Lee); Victoria Catlin (Blackie); Phoebe Augustine (Ronette Pulaski); Frank Silva (Killer Bob); Miguel Ferrer (Albert); Frances Bay (Mrs. Tremond).

Shelly and Bobby plan to exploit the now-catatonic Leo Johnson by taking care of him and spending his disability insurance money. Cooper receives two bits of interesting news: his ex-partner, Windom Earle, has escaped from a lunatic asylum, and Major Briggs, a player in the government investigation on UFOs, intercepted a deep space message concerning Cooper the night the agent was shot. A police sketch of “Bob” draws interest from Leland Palmer, who claims that the killer used to live next door to him when he was a boy. Madelaine feels the presence of “Bob” in her home.

**11. “Episode 11”** Written by Robert Engels; Directed by Lesli Linka Glatter; airdate: October 13, 1990; *Guest Cast*: Don Amendolia (Emory Battis); Al Strobel (One-Armed Man); Victoria Catlin (Blackie); Mak Takano (Jonathan Lee); Phoebe Augustine (Ronette Pulaski); Michael Parks (Jean

Renault); Miguel Ferrer (Albert); Lenny Dohlen (Harold Smith).

Lucy is pregnant, but this creates a problem for Andy, who fears he is sterile. Lucy reveals that the father is either Deputy Andy, or Dick Tremayne ... and she is not sure which. Nadine is recovering from an overdose, but she has lost her memory and now believes she is an adolescent girl with superhuman strength. Leland Palmer reveals to Cooper what he remembers about Bob, a man he calls "Robertson." Donna discovers Laura Palmer's secret diary.

**12. "Episode 12"** Written by Jerry Stahl, Mark Frost, Harley Peyton and Robert Engels; Directed by Todd Holland; airdate: October 20, 1990; *Guest Cast:* Royal Dano (Judge Sternwood); Claire Stansfield (Sid); Don Amendolia (Emory Battis); Michael Parks (Jean Renault); Ritch Brinkley (Darryl); Mak Takano (Jonathan Lee); Bellina Logan (Desk Receptionist); Lenny Dohlen (Harold Smith).

Audrey Horne is still a captive at One-Eyed Jack's, and her captors demand \$125,000 for her safe return. Meanwhile, Donna attempts to procure Laura Palmer's secret diary from Harold Smith, but it was a gift and he is reluctant to give it up. Leland Palmer plans to plead insanity for the murder of Jacques Renault, whom he believes murdered his daughter. Norma worries as a famous food critic is on the way to Twin Peaks to review her diner.

**13. "Episode 13"** Written by Barry Pullman; Directed by Graeme Clifford; airdate: October 27, 1990; *Guest Cast:* Royal Dano (Judge Sternwood); Lenny Dohlen (Harold Smith); Michael Parks (Jean Renault); Ritch Brinkley (Darryl); Victoria Catlin (Blackie); David L. Lander (Mr. Pinkle); Mike Ventrell, Bob Paisa (Guards).

The mysterious Mr. Tajimora arrives in Twin Peaks to negotiate with Ben Horne for the sale of Ghostwood Estates. Ben Horne and others are unaware of it, but the Japanese businessman is actually Catherine Martell in disguise! Cooper and Harry rescue Audrey Horne from One-Eyed Jack's, and in the process break some border regulations with Canada. Leland Palmer is released following his arraignment on the murder of Jacques Renault. Madelaine and Donna make another attempt to get Laura's secret diary from Harold Smith.

**14. "Episode 14"** Written by Harley Peyton and Robert Engels; Directed by Lesli Linka Glatter; airdate: November 3, 1990; *Guest Cast:* David Lynch (Gordon Cole); Lenny Dohlen (Harold Smith); Frank Silva (Killer Bob); Al Strobel (One-Armed Man); Mak Takano (Jonathan Lee); Ian Abercrombie (Tom Brockman); Ron Kirk (Cappy); Leonard Ray (Lounge Local); Bret Vadset (Joey); Jill Engels (Judy).

Josie plans to leave Twin Peaks, fearing violent reprisals from a mysterious man named Thomas Eckhart. Madelaine Ferguson plans to leave Twin Peaks soon as well, but James has still not gotten over her physical appearance, which so resembles Laura Palmer. Cooper and Harry question the One-Armed Man, who is in their custody, and he soon reveals that the killer called Bob is currently at the Great Northern Hotel.

**15. "Episode 15"** Written by Mark Frost; Directed by David Lynch; airdate: November 10, 1990; *Guest Cast:* Hank Worden (Waiter); Julee Cruise (Roadhouse Singer); David Lynch (Gordon Cole); Carel Struycken (Giant); Frank Silva (Killer Bob).

The One-Armed Man fingers Ben Horne as Bob, which prompts Cooper and Harry to arrest the prominent businessman. Audrey learns from Laura's secret diary that her father owns One-Eyed Jack's and that he slept with Laura. Worse, the diary confirms that Leland Palmer is aware of Bob's identity. Inhabited by the killer Bob, Leland Palmer murders Madelaine Ferguson.

**16. "Episode 16"** Written by Scott Frost; Directed by Caleb Deschanel; airdate: November 17, 1990; *Guest Cast:* David Patrick Kelly (Uncle Jerry); James Booth (Ernie); Kathleen Wilhoite (Gwen); Jane Greer (Vivian); Emily Fincher, Al Strobel (The One-Armed Man).

Leland Palmer has murdered Laura-look-alike Madelaine, but he lies to Donna and James about her whereabouts, even as he sees himself as "Bob" in the mirror. Cooper and Sheriff Truman tell Palmer that they have arrested Ben Horne for Laura's murder, and Palmer secretly rejoices. Bobby and Shelly continue to keep a paralyzed Leo in their care to collect his disability money, and Bobby plans to blackmail Ben Horne for the arson at the lumber mill. Norma's mother Vivian comes to Twin Peaks to introduce her new husband, and Madelaine's corpse is discovered by the police.

**17. "Episode 17"** Written by Mark Frost, Harley Peyton, Robert Engels; Directed by Tim Hunter; airdate: December 1, 1990; *Guest Cast:* Miguel Ferrer (Albert); Jane Greer (Vivian); Al Strobel (The One-Armed Man); Michael J. Anderson (Man from Another Place); Clive Rosengren (Mr. Zipper); Frank Silva (Killer Bob); Carel Struycken (Giant); Mae Williams (Mrs. Tremond); Hank Worden (Waiter).

Albert determines that Madelaine's murderer is the same person who killed Laura Palmer, and Cooper requests twenty-four hours in which to go on a vision quest and solve the crime. A page from Laura's secret diary reveals that Laura also dreamed of the dwarf and the red room. Andy learns that Lucy's baby may be his after all.... or may be Richard Tremayne's. Cooper gathers his suspects (including Leo, Leland, Bobby, and Ben Horne), deciphers his dreams, and arrests Leland Palmer for the murder of Laura Palmer. Leland is in fact possessed by the evil Bob, but the evil force vacates his body, leaving a guilt-ridden Leland Palmer to die.

*Note:* This is the episode which answers the mystery: "Who killed Laura Palmer?"

**18. "Episode 18"** Written by Tricia Brock; Directed by Tina Rathbone; airdate: December 8, 1990; *Guest Cast:* James Booth (Ernie); Michael Parks (Jean Renault); Jane Greer (Vivian); Clarence Williams III (Roger Hardy); Gavan O'Herlihy (Mountie/Broker); Tony Jay (Dougie); Don Calfa (Principal); John Boylan (Mayor Dwayne Milford); Lisa Cloud (P.E. Teacher); Tiffany Muxlow (Cheerleader); Susan Sundholm (Samantha).

Laura's murder has been solved, and three days later the fallout continues at Leland's funeral. A friend from the F.B.I. arrives in Twin Peaks to suspend Cooper because of his unorthodox methods in solving the crime. Bobby and Audrey Horne grow close, even as Bobby tries to blackmail her father, Ben. Cooper joins Major Briggs on a night fishing trip, and Briggs mysteriously disappears in a blinding light after warning Cooper about the mysterious "White Lodge."

**19. "Episode 19"** Written by Barry Pullman; Directed by Duwayne Dunham; airdate: December 15, 1990; *Guest Cast:* Clarence Williams III (Roger Hardy); James Booth (Ernie); David Duchovny (Dennis "Denise" Bryson); Tony Jay (Douglas "Dougie" Milford); Robyn Lively (Lana Milford); Annette McCarthy (Evelyn Marsh); Royce D. Applegate (Reverend); Ron Taylor, Dan O'Herlihy



(Andrew Packard); John Boylan (Mayor Dwayne Milford); Jill Engels (Trudy); Joshua Harris (Little Nicky).

Cooper believes a mysterious force in the woods has kidnapped Major Briggs and worries as the investigation into his conduct at One-Eyed Jack's continues with the arrival of a transvestite F.B.I. agent, Denise. James, who has broken up with Donna, meets a beautiful woman at a bar outside Twin Peaks. Josie Packard has also returned to town, seeking help from Catherine because her mentor and guardian, a man named Eckhart, wants her dead. Hawk warns Cooper that to reach the mythical White Lodge, where gods reside, man must first face the shadows in the "Black Lodge," a place of evil which can annihilate souls who have imperfect heroism when faced with fear.

**20. "Episode 20"** Written by Harley Peyton and Robert Engels; Directed by Caleb Deschanel; airdate: January 12, 1991; *Guest Cast:* James Booth (Ernie); David Duchovny (Dennis/Denise); Robyn Lively (Lana Milford); Tony Burton; Tony Jay (Doug Milford); Annette McCarthy (Evelyn Marsh); Nicholas Love (Malcolm Sloane); Ron Taylor; John Apicella (Jeffrey Marsh); John Boylan (Mayor Milford); Joshua Harris (Little Nicky); Geraldine Kearns (Irene Littlehorse); Molly Shannon (Judy Swain); John Epstein (Utility Stunt).

Cooper has received a correspondence from his unstable former partner, Windom Earle, with whom he is playing an ongoing game of chess. Ben Horne hires Bobby Briggs to spy on Hank Jennings, who is trying to put Horne out of business. An air force investigator arrives to learn the truth of Brigg's disappearance, and Cooper plans to buy a house in town called Dead Dog Farm ... a house which may be able to clear his name with the F.B.I. On a stormy night, Major Briggs reappears mysteriously, and warns that things are not okay in Twin Peaks.

**21. "Episode 21"** Written by Harley Peyton; Directed by Todd Holland; airdate: January 19, 1991; *Guest Cast:* James Booth (Ernie); David Duchovny (Dennis/Denise); Gavan O'Herlihy (Mountie); Annette McCarthy (Evelyn Marsh); Nicholas Love (Malcolm Sloane); Michael Parks (Jean Renault); J. Marvin Campbell (M.P. #1); Will Seltzer (Mr. Brunston); Craig MacLachlan (Dead Man).

Briggs recollects the events surrounding his disappearance from the woods, including a journey to deep space, and images of a giant owl. He tells Cooper and Sheriff Truman that he has been continuing the efforts of Project Blue Book, but instead of examining the stars for signs of nonhuman life, he has been investigating the earth beneath Twin Peaks in search of the mythical White Lodge. Bobby and Shelly grow tired of caring for the paralyzed Leo, and James falls in love with Evelyn Marsh, a woman being abused by her violent husband. Cooper, Denise, Hawk, and Truman use Ernie in a sting to bring down Renault and clear Cooper's name.

**22. "Episode 22"** Written by Scott Frost; Directed by Uli Edel; airdate: February 2, 1991; *Guest Cast:* Kenneth Welsh (Windom Earle); David Patrick Kelly (Uncle Jerry); Robyn Lively (Lana Milford); Annette McCarthy (Evelyn Marsh); David Warner (Thomas Eckhart); John Apicella (Jeffrey Marsh); Dan O'Herlihy (Andrew Packard); Brenda Strong (Jones); John Boylan (Mayor Dwayne Milford); Ron Blair (Randy St. Croix); Craig MacLachlan (Dead Man).

Cooper's unstable former F.B.I. partner, Windom Earle, has made his next chess move: he has left a dead man's corpse in the Twin Peaks police office to remind Cooper of the events surrounding the death of Carolyn Powell, Earle's wife and Cooper's lover. Leo, no longer paralyzed, terrorizes a frightened Shelly in a dark house. Evelyn Marsh is using James to get rid of her rich husband, Jeffrey.

Major Briggs collapses suddenly at the police station and then warns Cooper and Truman that the air force's search for the White Lodge is not ideologically pure.

**23. "Episode 23"** Written by Harley Peyton and Robert Engels; Directed by Diane Keaton; airdate: February 9, 1991; *Guest Cast:* Kenneth Welsh (Windom Earle); David Patrick Kelly (Uncle Jerry); Miguel Ferrer (Albert); Annette McCarthy (Evelyn Marsh); Nicholas Love (Malcolm Sloane); David Warner (Thomas Eckhart); Brenda Strong (Jones); Robert Bauer (Johnny); Matt Battaglia (Cop); Gerald Leouyer (Bartender).

James has been framed for the murder of Jeffrey Marsh, but Donna helps him escape the authorities. Windom Earle has captured Leo and forces him to obey him as his personal slave. Thomas Eckhart, the man who Josie fears more than anybody else, finds her even as Catherine plots to destroy him. Realizing that every chess piece he loses represents somebody's death in reality, Agent Cooper goes to visit Pete Martell, Twin Peaks' resident chess expert.

**24. "Episode 24"** Written by Tricia Brock; Directed by Lesli Linka Glatter; airdate: February 16, 1991; *Guest Cast:* Kenneth Welsh (Windom Earle); Billy Zane (Jack Wheeler); Miguel Ferrer (Albert); David Patrick Kelly (Uncle Jerry); David Warner (Thomas Eckhart); Dan O'Herlihy (Andrew Packard); Michael J. Anderson (Man from Another Time); Ron Blair (Randy St. Croix); Frank Silva (Bob).

Josie is manipulated into killing Thomas Eckhart. Working the front desk, Audrey Horne meets handsome guest Mr. Wheeler and receives a threatening note from Windom Earle. Shelly Johnson and Donna Hayward, who has just said goodbye for good to James Hurley, also receive the correspondence, which instructs them to go to the Road House at 9:30 that evening. Cooper and Truman try to save Josie, but she dies mysteriously, and Cooper has a strange vision of Bob, and the dancing dwarf.

**25. "Episode 25"** Written by Barry Pullman; Directed by James Foley; airdate: March 28, 1991; *Guest Cast:* Kenneth Welsh (Windom Earle); Billy Zane (Wheeler); Heather Graham (Annie); David C. Lander (Tim Pinkle); Brenda Strong (Jones); Ron Blair (Randy St. Croix); Julie Hayek (Model); Betsy Lynn George (Teen Model).

Truman mourns the death of Josie Packard, and Norma's sister Annie, an ex-nun, arrives in town. Windom Earle grows infuriated when he realizes that Cooper is playing for a stalemate, and promises to make him pay. The Log Lady discovers a triangle-shaped set of scars on her leg and recalls a disappearance in childhood and the call of an owl, causing Cooper and Briggs to speculate that she has also been abducted to the White Lodge. Earle pays Donna a visit at her home and presents his next chess move, even as he watches Cooper become acquainted with Annie.

**26. "Episode 26"** Written by Harley Peyton and Robert Engels; Directed by Duwayne Dunham; airdate: April 4, 1991; *Guest Cast:* Kenneth Welsh (Windom Earle); Billy Zane (Wheeler); Heather Graham (Annie); David Lynch (Gordon Cole); Brenda Strong (Jones); Robert Bauer (Johnny Horne); Ron Blair (Randy St. Croix); Jack McGee (Bartender).

Eckhart's beautiful assistant seduces Harry as he sleeps, and tries to murder him out of "sexual jealousy," but Harry thwarts the attempt. Gordon Cole of the F.B.I. arrives in town to reinstate Cooper, and warns that Windom Earle once worked on Project Blue Book too ... which means that he knows

all about the White and Black Lodges. Audrey and Donna gather evidence that they may be half-sisters, and Cooper discovers a meaningful wall drawing in Owl Cave ... a drawing which he feels will lead to a world both wonderful and strange. Earle also finds the strange drawing, and inverts the symbol ... which causes a cave in.

**27. “Episode 27”** Written by Mark Frost and Harley Peyton; Directed by Jonathan Sanger; airdate: April 11, 1991; *Guest Cast:* Kenneth Welsh (Windom Earle); Billy Zane (Wheeler); Heather Graham (Annie); Robyn Lively (Lana Milford); David Lynch (Gordon Cole); John Boylan (Mayor Milford); Ted Raimi (Heavy Metal Youth); John Charles Sheehan (Bellman).

Windom Earle seeks to open the doorway to the Black Lodge as Bobby encourages Shelly to enter the Miss Twin Peaks Beauty Contest. Cooper discovers that Earle has sent a poem to Audrey Horne, Donna Hayward, and Shelly Johnson ... a poem Cooper once sent to Earle’s wife, Carolyn Powell. Cooper begins to connect a series of mysteries linking Leo Johnson’s disappearance, Earle’s presence in Twin Peaks, and the presence of the bizarre petroglyph in Owl Cave. Peter Martell manages to open the strange black puzzle box left to Catherine by the late Thomas Eckhart.

**28. “Episode 28”** Written by Harley Peyton and Robert Engels; Directed by Stephen Gyllenhaal; airdate: April 18, 1991; *Guest Cast:* Kenneth Welsh (Windom Earle); Billy Zane (Jack Wheeler); Heather Graham (Annie Blackbird); Robyn Lively (Lana Milford); Ted Raimi (Rusty); Dan O’Herlihy (Andrew Packard); Willie Garson (Heavy Metal Roadie); John Boylan (Mayor Milford); Carel Struycken (Giant); Ron Blair (Randy St. Croix); Ron Kirk (Cappy); Frank Silva (Bob); Layne Robert Rico (Pilot).

Earle has sent another message to Cooper, this time a corpse locked tight in a giant pawn chess piece sculpture. Lucy enters the Miss Twin Peaks Contest and promises to choose a father for her baby: Dick or Andy. Briggs learns that Earle was removed from Project Bluebook after discovering that place of evil and fear called the Black Lodge. Earle captures Briggs and questions him about his knowledge of the Owl Cave drawings, even as Earle comes closer to finding the doorway to the Black Lodge.

**29. “Episode 29”** Written by Barry Pullman; Directed by Tim Hunter; airdate: June 10, 1991; *Guest Cast:* Kenneth Welsh (Windom Earle); Heather Graham (Annie Blackbird); David L. Lander (Pinkel); Robyn Lively (Lana Milford).

Leo frees Major Briggs so that he can save Shelly, one of Earle’s three “Queens,” from a terrifying fate. Meanwhile, Audrey Horne, Shelly Johnson, Annie Blackbird, Nadine Hurley, Donna Hayward, Lana Milford, and Lucy Moran are all enrolled in the Miss Twin Peaks contest. Cooper realizes that Earle intends to steal his “queen” (the chess piece and the winner of the contest) and take her to the door of the White/Black Lodges as Jupiter and Saturn conjunct, and the power of good and evil intensifies. Earle disappears behind a velvet curtain, and forcibly takes Cooper’s love, Annie, to the other world.

**30. “Episode 30”** written by Mark Frost, Harley Peyton and Robert Engels; Directed by David Lynch; airdate: June 10, 1991; *Guest Cast:* Kenneth Welsh (Windom Earle); Heather Graham (Annie Blackbird); Carel Struycken (Giant); Hank Worden (Waiter); Ed Wright (Dell Mibbler); Michael J. Anderson (Man from Another Time); Frank Silva (Bob); Phoebe Augustine (Ronette Pulaski); Jan D’Arcy (Sylvia Horne); Andrea Hays (Heidi); Arvo O. Katoyisto (Security Guard); Brenda E. Mathers

(Caroline).

Cooper follows Earle and Annie to a circle of twelve sycamore trees that serve as the opening to the worlds of the Black/White lodges. Nadine's memory returns suddenly, and Donna leaves home after she learns that Ben Horne is her biological father. A bomb goes off in the Twin Peaks bank, possibly killing Audrey Horne, Pete Martell, and Andrew Packard. Cooper ascends to the other side, and sees the red velvet room from his dreams, and finally, he returns to Twin Peaks ... with the spirit of Evil Bob inhabiting his body.

## ***Dracula: The Series (1990–1991)***

### **CRITICAL RECEPTION**

“Unfortunately, *Dracula* looked more like a spoiled Wall Street yuppie than a sinister vampire, the kids came off as spoiled brats, and Gustav was terrible and too old. The European street sets on the studio’s back lot were overused, which detracted from the show. The producers were paid to deliver thirteen episodes, and that’s what we got, and thankfully no more.”—Rosemary Ellen Guiley, *The Complete Vampire Companion—Legend and Lore of the Living Dead*, Macmillan Publishers, pages 141–142.

“Sort of the television equivalent of *Plan 9 from Outer Space*. It could be worse.”—William Anchors, *Epilog Journal* #41: “*Dracula: The Series*,” page 31.

“The Transylvanian Count now goes by the name of Alexander Lucard and is a very modern industrial tycoon. As played by Geordie Johnson, he’s one rapacious-looking corporate raider.... Muddying up the picture are a pair of American teens ... who are visiting their European uncle.... They know Lucard’s secret and try each week to thwart him. That adds the flat notes to a frequently stylish series with good special effects. Grade: B-.”—David Hiltbrand, *People*, November 19, 1990, page 14.

### **FORMAT**

Imagine for just a moment that you’re a child again. You and your older brother have been sent abroad for the summer to stay with dotty old Uncle Gustav. Almost immediately upon your arrival at his house (which, oddly, is filled with crucifixes and garlic...), you learn that a prominent and wealthy neighbor is none other than *Dracula*, the prince of darkness himself! He has changed his name to Alexander Lucard, but he is the legendary count, still thirsting for blood.

This is the scenario for the syndicated family horror show *Dracula: The Series*. Where syndicated contemporaries like Laurel’s *Monsters*, New Line and Lorimar’s *Freddy’s Nightmares*, and Paramount’s *Friday the 13th: The Series* all relied heavily on violence and even gore, *Dracula* fits better into the TV tradition of “tolerable terror.” Though things could occasionally get quite hairy and action-packed, *Dracula* always remains a family-oriented series appropriate for children. Because of its “family” nature, *Dracula* was almost immediately, and rather vociferously, disowned by most horror fans, who felt that it was juvenile (which it was ... purposefully). Yet to its credit, *Dracula: The Series*’ combination of quirky humor and family entertainment was surely a forerunner to the glut of “horror”-oriented youth series of the late ’90s such as *Goosebumps*, *Animorphs*, and even the animated *Tales from the Crypt Keeper*. In this regard, *Dracula: The Series* was ahead of its time, even if it has been rather thoroughly misunderstood and misremembered by most critics and fans who wanted a prime-time bloodfest worthy of the Christopher Lee, Hammer Film tradition rather than an innocuous but good-humored series based on horror literature’s greatest antihero.

### **HISTORY**

The horrific life story of Count *Dracula* has been popular now for well over a century. Bram Stoker’s

fictional vampire has been the inspiration for countless film adaptations (in 1931, 1979 and 1992 to name just three versions), and even a TV series (*Cliffhangers: The Curse of Dracula*). More importantly, the tale of a solitary bloodsucker with the power to transform into beasts such as bats and wolves has captured the imagination of generation after generation. Eternal life, mesmerism, sheer power, strength, eroticism, and danger are all key ingredients of the Dracula myth, elements which assure the immortality of this tortured, evil, antihero.

In 1990, just two short years before Francis Ford Coppola mounted the most expensive, arguably most faithful adaptation of Stoker's novel, another group of artists purposefully went in an opposite direction. With the advent of the last decade of the 20th century came a new and modern view of evil as well. Accordingly, the series called *Dracula* would view the Prince of Darkness not just as a literal bloodsucking vampire, but as a metaphorical one to boot. To wit: the new TV Dracula was to be a handsome, yuppie corporate raider with perfect hair, an obsession with exercise, and a greedy appetite for not just hemoglobin, but currency. As David Patterson, executive producer of *Dracula: The Series* explains:

Our interpretation of Dracula is a logical extension of the vampire legend as if he were operating in the world today. What could be more relevant than to portray Dracula as the ultimate "Gordon Gekko" (of *Wall Street* fame) seeking eternal life?<sup>1</sup>

*Dracula: The Series* was also innovative in the way it chose to compete with its syndicated brethren (*She Wolf of London*, *Friday the 13th: The Series*, *Freddy's Nightmares*, *Monsters*). Instead of being the same, the producers opted to do something different ... even if it infuriated Dracula fans worldwide. They created an "all-family action adventure" in the horror milieu rather than an adult, gory fare designed to appeal primarily to the horror audience. This approach resulted in children and teens as protagonists, with campy, topical humor tossed in to amuse the adults. While horror and *Dracula* fans cringed en masse at the new interpretation of their favorite vampire, *Dracula: The Series* nonetheless boasted some interesting production strengths. Although the personnel were all Canadian (veterans of *Friday the 13th: The Series*, and later to move on to *Beyond Reality*), the show was shot entirely on location in scenic Luxembourg, which gave the show a remarkable authenticity. Lead Geordie Johnson, at first blush almost too young and handsome to play Dracula, was also quite charismatic in the lead role. He played his sometimes humorous role to the hilt, capturing both the menace of the character and the quirky humor envisioned by the show's producers.

Created by Glenn Davis and William Laurin (co-writers and story editors on the USA version of *Alfred Hitchcock Presents*) and distributed by Blair Entertainment (*Divorce Court*), *Dracula: The Series* began its syndicated run during late September of 1990 with 115 U.S. stations signed up (representing nearly 85% of the country). Production commenced on 21 episodes, with one show ("My Dinner with Lucard") serving as a budget-saving clip show. Frequent *Friday the 13th: The Series* guest performers such as Denis Forest, Kate Trotter, and Lynne Cormack made numerous appearances on *Dracula*, as did Geraint Wyn-Davies—soon to star in his own vampire show, *Forever Knight*. About the only "big" name to grace the short-lived series was *Space: 1999*'s Barry Morse, who appeared in the episode "My Fair Vampire."

Content-wise, the series focused mostly on three teens and an elderly uncle as they attempted to defeat the evil plans of Lucard. A romance bloomed between Sophie (Mia Kirshner) and Christopher (Joe Roncelli). Young Max (Jacob Tierney) was always getting deep into trouble of his own making.

Johnson's Dracula was a scoundrel, a double-crosser, and prone to one-liners which were so delightfully bad that they elicited groans and laughs at the same time.

Perhaps because it never tried to appeal to a hardcore horror audience, *Dracula: The Series* never became popular with American audiences. The series ended on a cliffhanger, but the program was canceled nonetheless. Today, *Dracula: The Series* has an avid cult following on the Internet, and the series has been rerun infrequently (usually on weekends) on the Sci-Fi Channel.

### CRITICAL COMMENTARY

For whatever the reason, a TV series sometimes proves irresistible to critics when it does not take itself or its premise too seriously. If the same series proves to be clever and charming to boot, then it really has something going for it. *Dracula: The Series* is interesting because it does rely heavily on off-kilter humor (in one show, Max asks Lucard if he is *really* Dracula, and the Prince of Darkness responds, deadpan, "No, I'm Milli Vanilli") as well as a clever premise (that Dracula is a corporate vampire as well as a bloodsucking one) to elevate it beyond the ordinary. This is not to say that *Dracula: The Series* is a perfect show, but merely that in concept and tongue-in-cheek execution, the series can be quite fun at times, considering that its mission was not to be over-the-top horror, but rather family-oriented hijinks. Where *Dracula: The Series* fails to succeed as artistic TV series for this reviewer is in its reliance on repetitive plot devices and ideas. And, sometimes, the humor is more juvenile than genuinely witty.

Some repetition is expected in a weekly TV series, but *Dracula: The Series* managed to reduce the menace of the regal Count Dracula by having him beaten and bested by children week-in and week-out. Worse, the series grew a little stale because in virtually every one of the twenty episodes somebody (among the heroes) successfully broke into Lucard's castle. This happened so much (in "Children of the Night," "The Vampire Solution," "A Little Nightmare Music," "Get a Job," "Damsel in Distress," "Sophie, Queen of the Night," "My Fair Vampire," "Decline of the Romanian Vampire," and "Klaus Encounters of the Interred Kind") that in "My Fair Vampire," an exasperated Lucard quipped: "Does everyone have a key to this castle?!" The joke was a riot, beautifully delivered by Geordie Johnson, but it was also a back-door acknowledgment of sorts that at least one cliché had been worn threadbare by the series writers. Also considerably less-than-thrilling was the repetitive weekly denouement which saw no real change in the status quo. Dracula could not be killed, lest the series end, and neither could the leads. The best that could be hoped for (and expected) at the end of each half hour was a draw, a balance. Thus the format was flawed and repetitive even though the humor and the concept of *Dracula: The Series* were absolutely solid. There are moments of great humor and irony in various episodes, but few shows stand out as being superlative adventures.

Casting children/teens as the series leads probably did precious little to help *Dracula* succeed either. Horror/sci-fi fans are notoriously hard on children, perhaps because many fans are children themselves and prefer not to be confronted with that fact. One would be hard put to remember a less-popular *Doctor Who* companion than the adolescent Adric, or a more-hated *Enterprise* crew member than teenager Wesley Crusher. Children, as characters, tend not to work in the genre because of a latent self-loathing among male fans. There is always the attitude of "who does that kid think he is ... defeating Dracula, saving the *Enterprise*, piloting the TARDIS," whathaveyou.

Also, there is the undeniable reality that suspense is dramatically lessened in stories where children are heavily involved in the actions. Filmmakers are (probably rightfully) hesitant to put kids in

danger, so in horror shows/movies, they always survive the “evil” or danger. Anyone who has watched many horror films realizes this truth, and tunes out almost immediately when a child is introduced. The youngster might as well wear a bright label which reads “survivor,” thus reducing all future tension. The last major film to break societal and filmic conventions and murder a child was *Alien*<sup>3</sup>, which was universally hated and berated by fans. So, it is not likely to happen again any time soon. But, as for *Dracula: The Series*, the prominence of children is essentially a warning to genre fans to “stay away” because there will be little real horror on the show.

On the other hand, it is illuminating to note that *Dracula: The Series* casts the very young (children) and the very old (senior citizens) in the role of heroes. This is a tacit but visual acknowledgment, perhaps, of the fact that only the young and very old are even capable of believing in things like ghosts or vampires, either because of naive innocence or senile dementia. In the world of *Dracula*, the children are taken seriously by Uncle Gustav even though they are young and silly. Gustav never talks down to them or treats them as inferiors, he merely sees them as fellow warriors. That is a particularly positive and nice stance to take, and one in line with *Dracula: The Series*’ ambition to be a family show. At the same time, it is impossible *not* to realize that the series casts children (those before their prime) and seniors (those after their prime) as heroes and the 20-50 set (those *in* their prime) as the villains. Dracula is an undead personification of yuppie values, a philosophy too adult for the young and too young for the old. Klaus, the fallen son, Dracula, the tycoon, and even Eileen Townsend, the absentee mother, represent yuppie values: the “new” evil of *Dracula: The Series*, and they can only be combated by the disenfranchised, out-of-power groups who have not bought into the ideals of this narrow worldview, specifically children and seniors.

Sometimes, *Dracula: The Series* is like *The Hardy Boys* on speed. It is at its best when it incorporates zany, seemingly incongruous ideas into its format. In “I Love Lucard,” *Casablanca*’s climactic airport sequence is lovingly restaged to include a vampire, and then tagged with a brilliant coda which forever kills any romantic notions surrounding Lucard’s true nature. “My Fair Vampire” takes a refreshing stab at Pygmalion legend, and “What a Pleasant Surprise!” pays homage to the silent horror films of the 1920s. In this superlative episode, a silent movie star who once played a vampire on the silver screen trades his humanity for immortality, only to learn that vampires cannot be photographed. Thus he is cursed never to work in the industry he once loved. The story ends as the actor realizes it is better that his work remain immortal than he himself. Touching and well-crafted, this was an episode that had something meaningful to say, and it did so in an adult rather than juvenile fashion. “Decline of the Romanian Vampire” was also of interest, locking Helsing and Lucard in a room together to share a tête-à-tête about the nature of good and evil.

Above all else, Geordie Johnson’s Dracula was a compelling character to watch. He is a man (or a thing, rather) who loves art (“Get a Job”), trusts no one (“Bad Blood”), and lacks compassion (“I Love Lucard”). Although he claims in the latter episode that his nature serves him, not vice versa, the series cogently establishes how Lucard’s life as an avaricious vampire actually isolates him from things like family, love, and companionship. In that sense, Lucard remains a pathetic, lonely figure not all that different from the one that Stoker envisioned so long ago. Johnson seems plugged into the tragic aspects of Dracula, so his portrayal is worthy of serious attention.

The best way to watch *Dracula: The Series* is with an open mind. Be a child again and imagine that it is time for your summer vacation, your next door neighbor is a vampire, and that anything in the world is possible, including ray guns and endless love. The adult in you may rebel at that notion, and



point to all the rather serious flaws in this short-lived series, but the child inside will find plenty to respond to if you only let it. Do not go in expecting horror, but if it airs, feel safe in leaving your kids in front of the TV with *Dracula: The Series*. After all, who says that all shows have to be the same, or that every horror show aired since 1970 must be deadly serious? *Dracula: The Series* is different all right, sometimes in a good way, sometimes not.

## CAST AND CREDITS

*Cast:* Geordie Johnson (Alexander Lucard/Dracula); Bernard Behrens (Uncle Gustav Von Helsing); Jacob Tierney (Maximillian Townsend); Joe Roncelli (Christopher Townsend); Mia Kirshner (Sophie Metternich).

*Credits:* *Developed by:* Glenn Davis and William Laurin. *Director of Photography:* Maris Jansons. *Production Designer:* Richard Hudolin. *Line Producer:* Manan Bougie-Boyer. *Producers:* Glenn Davis and William Laurin. *Executive Producers:* Robert Halmi Jr., David J. Patterson. *Creative Consultant:* Sandy Pearl, Dan Martin. *Executive in Charge of Production:* Wendy Grean. *Executive in Charge of Post-Production:* Timothy Williams. *Story Editors:* Phil Bedard, Larry Lalonde. *Casting:* Dierdre Bowen, Tina Gerussi. *Editor:* Bill Goddard. *First Assistant Director:* Alan Goluboff. *Second Assistant Director:* Christopher Ball. *Production Coordinators:* Jean Gerin, Dianna Williams. *Assistant Production Manager:* Jennifer Jonas. *Assistant Art Director:* Vlasa Svoboda. *Costume Designer:* Paul-Anare Guerin. *Set Decorators:* Claire Alary, Suzanne Lalorecque. *Property Master:* Patrice Benge. *Script Supervisor:* France Boudreau. *Gaffer:* Jean Courteau. *Makeup Artist:* Joan Isaacson. *Hairstylist:* Bob Pritchett. *First Assistant Camera:* Glen Treilhard. *Second Assistant Camera:* Jeff Hohener. *Sound:* Gabor Vadnay. *Key Grip:* Yvon Bourdrais. *Stunt Coordinator:* Minor Mustain. *Visual Effects Supervisor:* John Gajdecki. *Music Supervisor:* Unlimited Production Ltd., David Greene. *Composer:* Christopher Dedrick. *Special Effects:* Performance Solutions, John Laforet. *Assistant Picture Editor:* Mary Jane Patterson. *Production Accountant:* Lilly Partheniou. *Best Boy Electric:* John Lewis. *Best Boy Grip:* Michel Bertrand. *Boom:* Francois Perrier. *Postproduction Facility:* VTR Productions Masters Workshop Film House. *Produced in Association with:* Homescreen Entertainment Ltd., Cinexus/Famous Players, RHI Entertainment, Blair Entertainment and AMG (Action Media Group).

## EPISODE GUIDE

*Note:* Airdates vary from city to city, so the order listed below is production order, sans airdates.

**1. “Children of the Night”** Written by Glenn Davis and William Laurin; Directed by Allan Eastman; *Guest Cast:* Lynne Cormack (Eileen Townsend); Cintija Eastman (Receptionist); Veronique Prune (Officer Maria Schmidt).

Young American brothers Max and Christopher Townsend relocate to the home of their Uncle Gustav Von Helsing in Eastern Europe, and precocious Max immediately suspects that his uncle is a vampire. In truth, Max is mistaken: Helsing is the very human enemy of billionaire playboy Alexander Lucard ... Dracula ... an industrialist and creature of the night.

**2. “Double Cross”** Written by Phil Bedard and Larry Lalonde; Directed by Allan Eastman; *Guest Cast:* Dawn Greenhalgh (Anna Dyson); John Gilbert (Peter Dyson); Francois Pescatore (Sexton).

Gustav informs Max that a special crucifix hanging in the hallway protects his home from Dracula's attacks. Max takes down the cross to have it blessed by a priest, leaving the Helsing house wide open for a nighttime attack by Lucard.

**3. "The Vampire Solution"** Written by Peter Meech; Directed by Alan King; *Guest Cast:* Geraint Wyn-Davies (Klaus); Thomas Goerz (Inspector); Jonathan Welsh (Arthur Bauer).

After developing a solution which can reverse the effects of vampirism, Gustav is captured by a vampire thug, Klaus, who is working for Lucard. Lucard believes Gustav's bluff that he has developed a computer virus which will destroy his financial empire, and plots to turn Gustav and his partner, Arthur, into vampires.

**4. "The Boffin"** Written by Glenn Davis and William Laurin; Directed by Allan Eastman; *Guest Cast:* Patrick Monckton (Dr. St. John Smythe); Lee MacDougall (Dr. Benedict).

A hapless vampire expert who has come to town to hawk a vampire-tracking device befriends Max as Chris tries to work up the courage to ask Sophie out on a date. Max and Dr. Smythe work on an antivampire laser gun (which fires amplified sunlight) even as Smythe meets with the man he wants to fund production on the weapon: Alexander Lucard.

**5. "Double Darkness"** Written by Stu Woolley; Directed by Randy Bradshaw; *Guest Cast:* Denis Forest (Nosferatu); Laurie Paton (Dr. Gloria Cross); Richard Liss.

Lucard's industries suffer a startling bout of losses and sabotage, and the undead tycoon suspects that an old enemy, Nosferatu, is free after fifty years of imprisonment in an ancient Roman tomb. Meanwhile, Max falls in love with the beautiful Dr. Gloria Cross, a specialist in Neanderthal cave art who is secretly in league with Nosferatu.

**6. "Black Sheep"** Written by Phil Bedard and Larry Lalonde; Directed by Allan Eastman; *Guest Cast:* Geraint Wyn-Davies (Klaus); Michael Fletcher (Paul Yeager).

Gustav is asked to assist Mr. Yeager, a widower whose wife, Amelia, has been turned into a vampire by Klaus, at the same time that Max fiddles with an old radio which seems to be picking up transmissions from Lucard's cell phone. Gustav saves Klaus from Yeager because Klaus is Gustav's only son ... and he still loves him even though he has been a vampire for thirteen years.

**7. "What a Pleasant Surprise!"** Written by Glenn Davis and William Laurin; Directed by Allan Eastman; *Guest Cast:* Lynne Cormack (Eileen Townsend); Kim Coates (Jonas Carey); Brigid Tierney (Little Girl #1); Sybil Eastman (Little Girl #2); Alma Prica (Silent Movie Heroine).

Lucard purchases an old theater despite Gustav's attempts to preserve it as a historical landmark. Gustav investigates the theater one night and learns that silent movie star Jonas Carey, lead of *The Vampire's Tomb*, is residing there and ready to make his big comeback.

**8. "Damsel in Distress"** Written by Phil Bedard and Larry Lalonde; Directed by Rene Bonniere; *Guest Cast:* Lynne Cormack (Eileen Townsend); Tom Wood (Carl Brewer/Harold).

Mrs. Townsend has returned to town to make a business deal with Lucard, but he has had a very

negative effect on her temperament and demeanor with her children. Max and Chris learn that their Mom is now a vampire, an underling to Lucard, and they try to rescue her when Gustav is captured.

**9. “Mind Over Matter”** Written by Glenn Davis and William Laurin; Directed by Allan Eastman; *Guest Cast:* Judy Marshak (Lana Zorro); Chas Lawther (Lane Zorro); Alexandra Kazan (Cleo Cooper).

Max discovers the crypt of Vlad the Impaler—Dracula himself—among some ancient ruins. Meanwhile, Gustav exposes two psychics on a local talk show, *Cleo Talk*, and is shocked when Lana Zorro, professional prognosticator, seems to know the secrets of his life.

**10. “A Little Nightmare Music”** Written by Sean Kelly; Directed by Rene Bonniere; *Guest Cast:* Gina Wilkinson (Contessa Delores de Suarez); Kirsten Kieferle (Street Artist).

A wealthy and beautiful jet-setter shows an interest in making Sophie her apprentice as Christopher prepares to make his public debut playing the guitar. Sophie starts to grow close to her new sponsor, unaware that the Contessa is a vampire angling for Lucard’s fortune.

**11. “Get a Job”** Written by Glenn Davis and William Laurin; Directed by Alan King; *Guest Cast:* Louise Vallance (Julia Heisenberg); John LeFebvre (Captain Wolf).

Christopher is hired as a bike courier for an expensive art gallery, but he soon learns that Lucard is interested in the beautiful new owner, Julia. Sophie investigates the gallery and discovers that Julia is peddling stolen art ... or worse: forged art!

**12. “The Great Tickler”** Written by Glenn Davis and William Laurin. Directed by Alan King; *Guest Cast:* Patrick Monckton (Dr. Magnus Smythe); Harry Hill (Mycroft Tickler/St. John Smythe); Phil Bedard.

Lucard engages the services of a renowned lounge act, the Great Tickler, apparently to play at a private function at his castle. Gustav, a fan, and Dr. Magnus Smythe, Tickler’s brother, must save the self-important performer from Lucard’s grip.

**13. “Bad Blood”** Written by Phil Bedard and Larry Lalonde; Directed by Randy Bradshaw; *Guest Cast:* Sam Malkin (Dr. Varney); Michael De Sadeleer (Vincent).

Dracula grows deathly ill after drinking bad blood, and he seeks the help of his personal vampire physician, Dr. Varney. The news is bad for the Prince of Darkness: unless he can drink the purified water from a local spring (which Lucard’s own factories have polluted!) he will die a horrible, lingering death.

**14. “Sophie, Queen of the Night”** Written by Peter Meech; Directed by Alan King; *Guest Cast:* Marilyn Lightstone (Mrs. Pfenning); Araby Lockhart (Miss Ringhoff); Tamara Gorski (Alexa Singleton).

Sophie has been turned into a vampire by Vincent, her existentialist former boyfriend and servant to Lucard. Chris is devastated by the loss of his true love to evil, but Gustav believes that the purified spring water which once saved Lucard’s life from a rare disease may also return Sophie to her normal, human state.

**15. “My Girlfriend’s Back, and There’s Gonna Be Trouble”** Written by Jack Blum and Sharon Corder; Directed by Jeff Woolnough; *Guest Cast:* Tamara Gorski (Alexa Singleton); Dave Nichols (Ted Singleton); David Buckley.

Sophie is outraged and then brokenhearted when Chris’s old girlfriend from Philadelphia shows up in town with her yuppie father, hoping to win back Chris’s affections. Meanwhile, Lucard is hounded by the obnoxious American businessman, and eager to turn the tables on the corporate version of a vampire.

**16. “Bats in the Attic”** Written by Pascal Bonniere; Directed by Rene Bonniere; *Guest Cast:* Jack Blum (Alfred/Lawrence); Phil Bedard (Delivery Boy).

Sophie helps Chris jumpstart his rock-n-roll career by rewriting his lyrics and reinterpreting his music, just as Gustav struggles in vain to pen his memoirs. Meanwhile, Max befriends a nerdy bookseller named Lawrence who seems desperate to become a vampire, but who hides a secret.

**17. “My Fair Vampire”** Written by Phil Bedard and Larry Lalonde; Directed by Michael Sloan; *Guest Cast:* Barry Morse (Frederick Rilling); Marina Anderson (Amber Santana/Carolyn Elmhurst); David Quinlan (Terruzzi the Great); Mary Delli Colli (Diva).

An old vampire-hunting colleague of Gustav’s finds life in a nursing home to be quite unhappy and warns Gustav that a vampire is killing the residents there. Meanwhile, Lucard plays Pygmalion to a hapless young singer in hopes of turning her into his fair (undead) lady.

**18. “Decline of the Romanian Vampire”** Written by Glenn Davis and William Laurin; Directed by Jeff Woolnough; *Guest Cast:* Geraint Wyn-Davies (Klaus).

Max accidentally breaks the circle of holy water that imprisons Klaus, setting the vicious vampire free from the Helsing family tomb. Gustav hunts Klaus, unaware that his vengeful son is planning to double-cross both him and Lucard.

**19. “I Love Lucard”** Written by Stu Wooley; Directed by Allan Kroeker; *Guest Cast:* Andrew Gillies (Lance Burton); Kate Trotter (Margo Burton).

An occult novelist and his wife visit town, each with an agenda: Lance Burton wants to expose Lucard as a vampire in his new book, *Vampires Among Us*, and Margo is Lucard’s old lover—still harboring some feelings for him. Lucard threatens to kill Lance, and Margo makes a deal to keep her husband alive.

**20. “My Dinner with Lucard”** Written by Phil Bedard and Larry Lalonde; Directed by Rene Bonniere; *Guest Cast:* Geraint Wyn-Davies (Klaus).

Lucard invites Helsing, Sophie, Max, and Chris over for dinner at his house for a nostalgic night of conversation and memories. After dinner, however, things turn ugly as Dracula plots to turn the children into vampires.

*Note:* This clip show features scenes from (in order of appearance) “Children of the Night,” “Double Cross,” “Damsel in Distress,” “Sophie, Queen of the Night,” “Double Darkness,” “Mind Over Matter,”

“What a Pleasant Surprise!” “Bad Blood,” and “Black Sheep.”

**21. “Klaus Encounters of the Interred Kind”** Written by Glenn Davis and Larry Lalonde; From a story by Glenn Davis and William Laurin; Directed by Allan Kroeker; *Guest Cast:* Geraint Wyn-Davies (Klaus); Lynne Cormack (Eileen Townsend).

Eileen Townsend is unexpectedly promoted and reassigned permanently to Philadelphia, so it is time for Max and Chris to pack their bags and return to America. Meanwhile, Gustav determines that vampires, neither living nor dead, exist in a world outside of time and space, so he hopes to find a way into that world to free his son Klaus from the vampire curse.

*Note:* This episode ends with an as yet unresolved cliffhanger.

## *She Wolf of London/Love and Curses (1990–1991)*

### CRITICAL RECEPTION

“Hodge makes an intelligent character out of the cursed young student, and Dickson gives the professor humor, a shade of early James Mason, and an absurd air.... Sound is excellent and effects good.... Writers-creators Tom McLoughlin and Mick Garris have the good sense to play Randi’s predicament with a semi-straight face.”—*Variety*, October 15, 1990, page 79.

“two thirds of the time, was as good as science fiction TV gets ... Kate Hodge and Neil Dickson complimented each other quite well ... Hodge showed remarkable poise ... Dickson was a pleasant surprise.... The last six shows were singularly dismal, *at best*.”—Paul Hanlin, Jr., *Epilog* #28, March 1993.

### FORMAT

The head writers on *She Wolf of London/Love and Curses* aptly described their series premise as *Remington Steele* meets *Kolchak: The Night Stalker*, and that description is as good a place to start as anywhere with this early '90s syndicated horror adventure. The series follows the adventures of professor of mythology Ian Matheson (Neil Dickson) and American graduate student Randi Wallace (Kate Hodge) as they not only romance one another, but face down a gallery of supernatural monstrosities including a bogman risen from the muck (“The Bogman of Leitchmour Heath”), a malevolent devil clown (“The Juggler”), an army of the living dead (“Can’t Keep a Dead Man Down”), a succubus (“She-Devil”), an evil circus (“Big Top She Wolf”), literary icons come to dangerous life (“Little Bookshop of Horrors”), a race of angry trolls (“Curiosity Killed the Cravitz”), and even a legal firm populated by vampires (“Habeas Corpses”). Settings on the series include an insane asylum run by an evil scientist (“Moonlight Becomes You”), a little town menaced by an avenging spirit (“The Wild Hunt”), a haunted movie theater (“Bride of the Wolfman”), and even a sci-fi TV convention (“Beyond the Beyond”) plagued by murder. All of this horrific activity comes about after Randi is bitten by a werewolf during a trip to the moors, and she and Ian place an ad in a newspaper in hopes of happening upon a cure for lycanthropy.

Randi lives (in her own room) at the Matheson Bed and Breakfast with Ian, his mum and dad, American cousin Julian, and nosy Aunt Edna, and the historic home serves as the headquarters for the series’ first dozen or so episodes. Midway through the season, however, there was a drastic format change as the show become more overtly (and sophomorically) humorous, and Randi and Ian relocated to Los Angeles to work on a bizarre local talk show called *How Strange*. Ian’s house and family were deleted from the show, replaced by the slick TV producer, Skip Seville. The new title of the series became *Love and Curses*, and Randi and Ian finally stopped beating around the romantic bush. They moved into a condo together, but then made the unpleasant discovery that Randi was unable to make love without turning into a werewolf.

Lasting only twenty episodes and one season, *She Wolf of London/Love and Curses* remains a popular cult program to this day, despite its two very different formats.

## HISTORY

*She Wolf of London/Love and Curses* is yet another entry in the late '80s-early '90s horror/sci-fi TV syndication boom. Unlike competitors *Dracula: The Series* or *Star Trek: The Next Generation*, however, this series was to have been part of an ad hoc fifth American network (much like the WB or UPN today) which would be devoted solely to airing Universal-created projects. Three series were thus commissioned: *She Wolf of London*, a sitcom about slacker aliens called *They Came from Outer Space*, and the action/detective drama *Shades of L.A.* Unfortunately for a hopeful Universal, the network idea did not gel at that time, and only two stations, one the east coast, one on the west coast, ended up carrying the new “network” programming. For this reason only viewers of WWOR Channel 9 in New York, and KCOP in L.A. even remember *She Wolf of London* prior to its first real national exposure: a prime-time rerun on the Sci-Fi Channel in 1992.

*She Wolf of London* was initiated to compete with the horror glut which included *Friday the 13th: The Series*, *Freddy's Nightmares*, *Monsters*, *Tales from the Crypt*, and *Dracula: The Series*, but also because Universal had long been the honored torchbearer (particularly in the 1940s) for the genre. In fact, Universal maintained a huge library of horror movie titles which it owned, and it was seeking a famous title to update and adapt to TV. When *An American Werewolf in London*, a popular 1981 John Landis picture, proved unavailable for TV adaptation, the producers of the new series reached back much further in the Universal archives, all the way back, in fact, to a little remembered 1946 picture entitled *She Wolf of London*, which starred June Lockhart, Lloyd Corrigan, and Don Porter, and was directed by Jean Yarbrough. The story involved a woman (in London, of course) who feared that she had turned into a werewolf, and this idea, this kernel of a story, was carried over to the new TV series.

The *She Wolf of London* production team joined (financially) with the British HTV network and was headed by co-creators Mick Garris and Tom McLoughlin. Cast as romantic leads were Kate Hodge (of *Leatherface: The Texas Chainsaw Massacre III* [1990] and *Tales from the Crypt*: “Dead Right”) and the erudite Brit, Neil Dickson. Opposing these sparring would-be romantic partners was a collection of mythical ghouls, goblins, and so forth, but the serious (yet fun) and thoughtful attitude of the fledgling *She Wolf* show was soon to change. Garris and McLoughlin found their talents in demand elsewhere, and backed off on the day-to-day management of the series. In their stead, two other American writers were invited in to put their personal “stamp” on the show. Lee Goldberg (a former *Starlog* contributor) and William Rabkin, who have since perpetrated episodes of *SeaQuest* and *Diagnosis: Murder*, almost immediately undid the solid, serious work established in the early *She Wolf of London* episodes by upping the campy comedy aspects and downplaying the mythology/horror of the show. As the two authors explained to *Starlog* interviewer Bill Warren, they had their own ideas about what would make for good TV:

The first thing we did was to redefine the relationship [Ian and Randi], to make it more like *Moonlighting*.... The original conception of the series, I think, was to do more of the classic horror stories. The foggy moors, the castles, and use conventional monsters, mummies ... and take a new slant on them.... Bill and I have taken a much more light-hearted approach than the original creators had in mind.<sup>1</sup>

This kind of thing had happened before, unfortunately (particularly on the outer space series *Space: 1999*). Specifically, opinionated American minds had come in to an established series and changed everything, usually to the detriment of the whole enterprise. Not surprisingly, *She Wolf of London's*

quality dropped precipitously by mid-season. Though Hodge never lost her composure, sobriety, or dignity, Neil Dickson was not well-served by the new administration's goal to go for laughs at the expense of everything else. He was encouraged to go so "camp" that by mid-season poor Ian Matheson had lost his early charm and replaced it with smarm. The show's groping attempts to find humor resulted in ludicrous stories played wholly tongue-in-cheek, but *She Wolf* soon faced an even worse problem when HTV, horrified by what their money had wrought, pulled out of the financial deal ... along with their money. At this point, only two-thirds of the series' twenty episode commitment had been fulfilled, so Universal had no choice but to bring the series home to America, Los Angeles in fact. As announced by *Starlog* #165, the show was thus transformed into *Love and Curses*.<sup>2</sup> With the English supporting cast (which Rabkin and Goldberg had gone on record as disliking) axed, the interesting English settings gone, and all signs of quirky English charm missing in action, the series took what amounted to a second drastic plunge in quality, offering ridiculous stories about shape-shifting trolls who wanted to live in L.A. for better TV reception ("Curiosity Killed the Cravitz"), or worse, pizzeria-owning witches ("Mystical Pizza"). Although on most TV series it takes two or more seasons to see this remarkable level of concept erosion, *She Wolf of London* apparently went through what the charming 'Bots of *Mystery Science Theater 3000* often refer to as "quality extraction." By the time cancellation came, after 20 episodes (six in the new, dreadful format), the death of *She Wolf* almost seemed like a mercy killing.

After *She Wolf* died, it went to heaven on the Sci-Fi Channel, where the initial concept beguiled new fans and helped to cement a cult following. As late as 1997, there has been serious talk of a TV reunion for Ian and Randi, but if it does come to pass, one must hope that the original format is honored.

## CRITICAL COMMENTARY

Watching *She Wolf of London/Love and Curses* from start to finish is a little like witnessing the sinking of the *Titanic*. It is a monumental tragedy, something that should never have happened. The series begins promisingly with charm, romance, situationally appropriate humor, and enough horror to keep any genre fan interested if not enthralled, but all that good work manages to be undone by the show's final (dismal) episode.

Restraint and intelligence were the order of the day when *She Wolf of London* began. The stories it featured were to be interpreted as serious and thoughtful, with Randi's romantic banter firmly controlled, yet prominent nonetheless in a well-balanced mix. The *Moonlighting*-like relationship added a degree of humor, to be sure, but not so much humor that it became impossible to believe the characters were real, and that their adventures, though fantastic, were also real. Fifteen years earlier, *Kolchak: The Night Stalker* had also used humor to carry off a remarkable horror show, and for a while, it looked as if *She Wolf of London* might navigate that same delightful path. The early episodes (such as "The Bogman of Leitchmour Heath" and "The Juggler") are so strong, in fact, that this author seriously considered naming *She Wolf of London* one of the ten-best horror shows of all time.

Everything was in place for just such a positive judgment: strong and likable central characters with a well-defined relationship of unresolved sexual tension, stories which involved interesting mythological monsters and treated them knowledgeably and respectfully, a strong (and humorous) supporting cast, powerful horror movie imagery and camera work, and even that stereotypical British "quirky" humor which made the guest stars look like real (though bizarre) people rather than pawns of



the plot. Simply put, *She Wolf of London* had all the right ingredients in all the right proportions to generate a very tasty, very memorable brew. In its first few stories, it was as good as any modern TV terror yet produced.

“The Bogman of Leitchmour Heath” set the tone nicely for the early days of *She Wolf of London*. Ian and Randi visit a small rural community where Ian’s dotty old aunt Gertie has unearthed a “bogman” in her backyard. On their arrival, there are some mysterious killings and Randi and Ian fear that the Bogman, in conjunction with a local curse, is killing the townsfolk. In content, in execution, and in plot, this episode is as strong as any chapter of *The X-Files*. The location, rural England, is beautifully captured. There is plenty of “local color” in the odd townspeople, and the story treats Randi and Ian as genuine individuals with some very real sexual tension. In one thoroughly entertaining (and erotic) sequence, Randi and Ian are forced to share a bedroom together, and each one takes a peek at the other undressing (in tasteful silhouette, of course). It may not be art, but it is delightfully good fun, and the original concept (Randi as brash American woman; Ian as reserved British tight-ass) keeps the story moving at a good pace.

The same can be said of “The Juggler,” a story which Rabkin and Goldberg considered the worst of the season, but which rather artfully managed to do for its storyline an honor that Rabkin and Goldberg never granted their own work: it takes itself and the series as a whole seriously, or at least respectfully. Young Julian is highlighted in this episode as he protects a minister’s daughter from the apparition of a murderous French clown. Though there is an off-kilter feeling to some of the family moments in the show, Julian and guest star Claudia Bryan (as Liza) are handled with restraint and decency. They are teenagers, but they are not depicted as obnoxious or obvious. This careful treatment of minor characters invites viewers into the world of *She Wolf*. Their relationship is sweet, and it makes one grow involved in their interesting plight. The opposite approach (of *Love and Curses*) was to throw in humor at all costs, and it is that method which actually seems distancing. Who wants to invest time in an adventure where even the main characters cannot take their travails seriously? Basically, “The Juggler” works because there are rules and boundaries obvious in the capabilities of its villain, the ghostly clown. This is not an ill-defined free-for-all like later episodes, where anything can and does happen at any time. Additionally, supernatural forces in “The Juggler” are not considered a *fait accompli*, as in *Love and Curses*. The revelation of the paranormal in this situation, based on a study of myth and history, is handled with care and a degree of sobriety. Yes, there is humor in the show (Julian hears what he believes is a sexually provocative conversation between Ian and Randi), but again, there is balance. The humor does not outweigh the horror.

“Big Top She Wolf” is another *She Wolf of London* entry that flew high, primarily because it remembered that humor was only one facet of the show’s mix. In this episode, Randi runs afoul of an evil circus ringmaster who hopes to seduce her and steal her soul by promising her a cure for lycanthropy. Jason Carter of *Babylon 5* plays the ringmaster, Wakefield, with a high degree of charm, and not a little pathos, as he is surely a “cursed” individual himself. Not only did “Big Top She Wolf” explore the darkness around the world of the circus (a common theme in modern horror TV, by the way), it explored the relationship between Randi and Ian as she became more and more enamored of the mysterious soul who had entered her life and promised so much. Ian, for his part, remained loyal and concerned about Randi right until the end, so much so that he was willing to give up his life to rescue her. As it played on Randi’s hopes of being cured and Ian’s jealousy and fears of being rejected, this episode of *She Wolf* managed to be touching at the same time that it was frightening. The characters connected with the audience because viewers saw how badly Randi wanted to be human

again, and how deeply Ian loved Randi.

All this good, however, was just a preamble to a devastating decline which became obvious in “Moonlight Becomes You,” a “new approach” story heavily rewritten by Goldberg and Rabkin. Almost between episodes, Ian went from being an academic fuddy-duddy and skeptic to an eye-rolling cad who attempted to capitalize on his physical and sexual appeal every time a beautiful woman walked by. The villains of the piece, mad scientists all, were written and portrayed as walking, talking cartoons. Looking like a character out of Stuart Gordon’s seminal *Reanimator* (1985), the head scientist conducts experiments in an insane asylum with the kind of crazed (and unconvincing) two-dimensional enthusiasm of a thousand B-movies. Then, tacked onto this mess of a story, along comes a tender scene about the fear, regret, and self-hatred of those infected with the werewolf curse. Because the preceding 45 minutes were all smoke and joke, this attempt to be “meaningful” seems piped in from another series. Here the writers clearly tried to have it both ways: generating fear and tears, and failing to do either adequately. The episode’s only saving grace is the setting. The “evil” clinic is a beautiful structure with an imposing, Old World interior. The camera catches all of the action in beautiful low-angle and long shots. Despite the gorgeous visual appeal of “Moonlight Becomes You,” the story’s attempt, and failure, to be funny is what remains most memorable about it.

From that low point, things only got worse, with regular and guest actors alike obviously being encouraged to go way over-the-top in their performances. “She Devil” was an example of this trend. In this story, a love potion turns Randi (briefly) and Ian (at length) into lusty sex beasts. The story goes for laughter once more, and sacrifices the show’s sense of reality to do so. Randi drinks the potion and starts to suddenly go at it with a lab technician, while Ian is blissfully unaware, conferring with a scientist. Ian is seen in the foreground, talking, and Randi is in the background, moaning and carrying on like a sex addict. It is supposed to be humor through juxtaposition, but it is ill-conceived and badly staged. First of all, Ian is not but three feet from Randi, so he would certainly notice her shenanigans. Secondly, it is inconsistent with *She Wolf* lore for Randi to be affected by this potion. Even if Randi did get “randy” from the experience, she would transform into a She Wolf at that point. Worse, the teleplay treats Ian Matheson as a self-satisfied imbecile. To prove that the potion does not work, Ian goes into the laboratory (where there have already been multiple murders) and *gulps* down the chemical, untested! Of course, this is the excuse needed for Ian to transform into a monster again, but it does no service to this character (a college professor after all) to have him behave in so stupid a fashion. Knowing that there have been murders, would not Ian be at least a little careful about what dangerous chemicals he decides to ingest on a whim? How many college professors do you know who would just walk into a strange laboratory, pick up a strange vial, and gulp it down?

These kind of situational problems grew worse on *Love and Curses* until the serial literally became unwatchable. “Curiosity Killed the Cravitz,” by Lee Goldberg and William Rabkin again, just might be the worst hour of modern horror TV ever foisted on an unsuspecting audience. In this show, essentially a pilot for the revamped *Love and Curses* format, Ian and Randi encounter trolls who are shape-shifting into humans in L.A. and replacing the human originals of the neighborhood so that they can watch *Who’s the Boss* and *The Facts of Life* unimpeded by bad reception. The trolls are foiled when Ian and Randi recruit a robed wizard (who with white beard and pointed hat resembles something out of *The Hobbit*) to help them. The wizard uses his magic wand to zap the trolls, and Randi and Ian utilize the shape-shifting machine (Ian turns into a frog at one point) to defeat these baddies. The episode’s idea of wit is to have the next-door neighbors (really Trolls, of course) named “Brady,” as well as give Randi lines like “let’s get up there and kick some troll butt!” It should be

noted that “Curiosity Killed the Cravitz” does not have one moment of genuine horror, humor, or romance to recommend it. Come to think of it, it does not have one *genuine* moment in it at all! It is a smug, tongue-in-cheek show that displays nothing except a misguided belief that those perpetrating this nonsense are wittier than, above, or better than the horror genre they are attempting to lampoon.

The remainder of *Love and Curses* was as horrible and as obvious as “Curiosity Killed the Cravitz.” “Habeas Corpses” featured a law firm of vampires which Ian dispatched by throwing Chinese food (with garlic) at them. “Bride of the Wolfman” put Randi and Ian inside a black-and-white monster movie from the 1940s, but it was obvious by that time that the show was satirizing material which was far more inventive and imaginative than its own scripts. It is really almost amazing (and quite frightening) just how fast *She Wolf of London* went from being serious horror-romance to total dreck. In its short run it managed to belittle black and white monster pics (“Bride of the Wolfman”), insult and alienate *Star Trek* fans (“Beyond the Beyond”), and attack modern American suburbia (“Curiosity Killed the Cravitz”). In short, *She Wolf* went from being a show about mythology and its place in our world to one of ugly snideness, all sound and fury, representing nothing. For that reason, but especially for the hideous “Curiosity Killed the Cravitz,” *Love and Curses* is one of the five worst horror TV series of the modern age, even if *She Wolf of London* could have been a contender for the ten best list.

## CAST AND CREDITS

*Cast:* Kate Hodge (Randi Wallace); Neil Dickson (Ian Matheson); Jean Challis (Mum Matheson); Arthur Cox (Dad Matheson); Julian (Scott Fults); Dorothea Phillips (Aunt Elsa); *Love and Curses* only: Dan Gilvezan (Skip Seville).

*Credits:* *Created by:* Tom McLoughlin, Mick Garris. *Executive Producers:* Sheldon Pinchuck, Pat Finnegan, Bill Finnegan. *Executive Producers:* Patrick Dromgoole, Paul Sarony. *Producers:* David Roessell, Chuck Murray. *Supervising Producers:* Lee Goldberg, William Rabkin, Tom McLoughlin. *Executive Consultant:* Mick Garris. *Associate Producer:* Keith Webber. *Casting:* Betty Charkham. *Music Composed and Produced by:* Steve Levine. *Editor:* Paul Aviles. *Production Designer:* John Biggs. *Director of Photography:* Brian Morgan. *Prosthetics and Makeup Special Effects:* Christopher Tucker. *First Assistant Director:* Mike Higgins. *Second Assistant Director:* Kevin Westley. *Third Assistant Director:* Matthew Sharp. *Art Director:* John Reid. *Production Buyer:* Gill Edwards. *Costume Designer:* Maggie Chappelhow. *Costume Supervisor:* Marion Lester-Card. *Costume Assistant:* David Milsom. *Script Supervisor:* Lyn Robinson. *Makeup Supervisor:* Sallie Adams. *Makeup Assistant:* Susan Anna Lawley-Wakelin. *Special Makeup Effects Assistants:* Sinikko Ikaheimo, John Wallis, Birger Laube, Stephen Grasby. *Property Storeman:* Andrew Beales, Robert Hunt. *Standby Props:* David Walters. *Location Manager:* Russell Needham. *Special Effects:* David Harris. *Sound Mixer:* John Rodda. *Sound Assistant:* Martin Pearce. *Camera Operator:* Malcolm Vinson. *Focus Puller:* Tony Breeze. *Assistant Camera:* Jo Hilderley. *Second Assistant Camera:* Matthew Norman. *Gaffer:* Richard Hosken. *Electricians:* Richard Stevens, David Coles, Andrew Bailey. *Key Grip:* John Robinson. *Riggers/Drivers:* Steve Jones, Ian Williamson. *Standby Carpenters:* Peter Johnson. *Production Accountant:* Gary Nixon. *Production Secretary:* Lisa Gibson. *Assistant to Producers—England:* Lucy Moore. *Assistant to Producers—USA:* Dauri Chase, Kristen McCord. *Production Controller—USA:* Lori-Etta Taub. *Post production Supervisor:* Terry Maisey. *Assistant Editor:* James Mather. *Sound Editor:* Sarah Morton, Kate Hopkins. *Assistant Sound Editor:* Laura Lovejoy. *Dubbing Mixer:* Richard Crosby. *Assistant Dubbing Mixer:* Mark Bygrave. *Titles and*

*Opticals*: Howell Optical. *Title Sequence*: Plume Partners. *Color*: Rank Laboratories. *Computer Services*: Sargent-Disc Ltd., London. Produced in Association with HTV International, Finnegan-Pinchuk. Distributed by MTE—an MCA Company.

## EPISODE GUIDE

### • *She Wolf of London (1990–1991)*

*Note*: The episodes are listed below in production order. Several episodes were aired out of order during the original New York/Los Angeles run.

**1. “She Wolf of London”** Written by Mick Garris and Tom McLoughlin; Directed by Dennis Abey; airdate: October 9, 1990; *Guest Cast*: Pete Lee Wilson (Pitak); Annabelle Lee (Madame Elena); Phillip Manikum (Inspector Magid); Pavel Douglas (Dr. Stevens).

Beautiful American graduate student in mythology, Randi Wallace, arrives at university in London, and begins her tutelage under the pompous and self-important Professor Ian Matheson, expert in debunking mythology. While staying at the Matheson family bed- and-breakfast, Randi elects to do her own research about mythology and pays a visit to the English moors ... where she is bitten by a werewolf. Cursed to transform into a fierce “she wolf” every full moon, Randi and her new confidante, Ian Matheson, try to track down the gypsy werewolf who changed forever Randi’s life. After an exciting first adventure together, Ian and Randi put an ad in the local newspaper about the occult, an ad which they hope will lead them to the individuals who might know a cure for Randi’s lycanthropy.

**2. “The Bogman of Leitchmour Heath”** Written by Anthony Adams; Directed by Roger Cheveley; airdate: October 16, 1990; *Guest Cast*: John Hallam (Fergus Gray); Pamela Duncan (Aunt Gertie); Charles Lawson (Angus); Eve Ferret (Abigail); Roger Winslett (Mr. Oates); Adrian Cairns (Reverend Goodbody); Richard Coleman (P.C. Leary); Stuart Gordon (Fiddler); Andy Davis (Bodhranist); Val Musetti and Andy Bradford (Stunts).

Ian’s distant aunt in a small farm town is the first person to respond to Ian and Randi’s ad when she discovers a bogman buried in her backyard. A blind villager warns that the creature from the slime is a harbinger of doom, and Ian’s aunt requests that he and Randi come out to investigate. Soon, Aunt Gertie is dead, various villagers are lobbying to possess the valuable bogman, and Randi and Ian must sort things out. More murders occur, Randi and Ian consult the blind Celtic wise man, and the mystery resolves when the duo meets Fergus Gray and learn that he is conducting rituals to make the bogman, his ancestor Atticus, kill his enemies.

**3. “The Juggler”** Written by Jim Henshaw; Directed by Gerry Mill; airdate: October 30, 1990; *Guest Cast*: Gary Parker (The Juggler); John Carlin (Reverend Parfey); Claudia Bryan (Liza Parfey); Anderson Knight (Griscombe); Jonathan Rickard (Baker); Carol Kirkland (Miss Rigby); Christine Pollon (Teacher); Daniel Pope (Rod); Steve Edwards (Mick); Tina Pyne (Sacrificed Woman); Blaise Doran (Priest); Anna Corras Wilson (Mother); Jared Morgan (Mourner); Gerry Crampton (Stunts).

An ancient cult is evicted from the Church of All Saints on All Hallows Eve, and the cult’s maniacal leader contemplates killing the new reverend’s daughter, Liza, by summoning a supernatural creature called The Juggler. Julian befriends Liza, nursing a teenage crush, and is soon protecting her from the specter. As the British equivalent of Halloween approaches on November 5, the coven’s curse comes

to fruition as Liza is given a cursed gold ring which focuses the Juggler's evil attention on its wearer. Ian remembers the French myth of the Juggler, the Devil Clown and Bell Ringer, who preys on the children of his enemies ... but is it too late to save Liza?

**4. "Moonlight Becomes You"** Written by Valerie West; Directed by Brian Grant; airdate: October 23, 1990; *Guest Cast:* Christopher Guard (Dr. Hatchard); Ingrid Lacey (Diane); Susan Watkins (Miss Stowe); Peter Geeves (Otto); Tim Kirby (Burt); Ian Sharrock (Derek); Mark West (Derek Wolf); Dianne Youdale (She Wolf); Daphne Neville (Mary); Jackie DeBroad (Bertha); Waydon Croft (Grant); Richard Killyan (Wildman); Marie Paramour (Knifewoman); Peter Redman (Male Patient); Andy Bradford, Sy Hollands (Stunts).

A crazed woman breaks into Ian's office at the university and threatens to kill both Ian and Randi unless they return her twin brother to her. When the duo learns that the missing brother, Derek, believed he was a werewolf, they decide to investigate for his sister. The case takes Randi and Ian to the Marble Hill Sanitarium, where Ian pretends to be a psychiatrist and Randi is incarcerated as a violent, abusive, and savage client. An unscrupulous doctor at the institute is holding Derek captive and conducting a dangerous (and bloody) experiment to stimulate the transformation of werewolves with artificial moonlight in an effort to harness human aggression.

**5. "Nice Girls Don't"** Written by Lee Goldberg and William Rabkin; Story by Lee Goldberg, William Rabkin, and Abbie Bernstein; Directed by Roger Cheveley; airdate: November 6, 1990; *Guest Cast:* Stuart Linden (Ernest); Rachel Robertson (Robin); April Olrich (Isadora); Diane Youdale (Morgana).

Randi and Ian are unexpectedly accosted on the B&B doorstep by an old codger who claims to be a young man. A little investigating reveals that the old man is actually a twentysomething-year-old swinger, and that his youth has been stolen from him by a succubus, a female demon who entices men to their deaths. Ian and Randi stage a sting to kill the beautiful succubus, but soon Ian's youth has been drained away by the succubus as well. Randi traces the deadly succubus to a dating service and hopes to strike a bargain to restore Ian's youth, but meanwhile the succubus has found the virgin Julian at home at the B&B.

**6. "Little Bookshop of Horrors"** Written by Lee Goldberg and William Rabkin; Directed by Gerry Mill; airdate: November 13, 1990; *Guest Cast:* Pavel Douglas (Michael Westfield); Serena Scott Thomas (Hope Westfield); Roger Brierley (Gordon Ganza); Ron Berglass (Mel Berger); Patrick O'Connell (Dave McDonnell); Kate McKenzie (Miss Radisson); Dave Bilton (Delivery Man); Freda Rogers (Guard); Andy Bradford, Val Musetti, Sy Hollands (Stunts).

As Ian completes his book *Fright and Fraud: Ethnobiocentric Morphogenesis of the Mephisto Fallacy*, a rash of murders occur in London, all seemingly related to great literary works such as *Moby Dick*, *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, and *Camille*. Ian is urged by his publisher to transform his academic book into a horror novel called *Satan's Sex Slaves*, but there are larger problems to consider, such as the antiquarian book store which is selling the cursed texts. The bookseller, a man called Ganza, sells Randi a haunted version of *Anna Karenina* which almost leads to her untimely demise. Convinced now that the works of literature from the bookstore are haunted, Ian and Randi must stop a delivery of the cursed books to the House of Commons.

**7. "The Wild Hunt"** Written by Diana Ayers and Susan Sebastian; Directed by Brian Grant; airdate: December 4, 1990; *Guest Cast:* Nicolas Chagrin (Harley Clayton); Philippa Heywood (Betty); Al

Ashton (Mechanic); Peter Brace (Huntsman); Mark Drewry (Dave); Cathy Murphy (Mary); Diane Youdale (She Wolf); Andy Bradford (Stunts).

On a weekend getaway, Ian's car breaks down, stranding him and Randi in a backwater town being perpetually menaced by the apparition of a vicious hunter on a horse. A man whose girlfriend has been decapitated by this huntsman begs for help, claiming that he is a marked man. That night, the pony-tailed, metal-toothed warrior from hell claims his next victim, and Randi and Ian realize they have a genuine supernatural monster to bag. The same night, Randi and Ian are marked for death by the huntsman, and Ian learns that the specter is the hateful ghost of a man whose land was stolen during his life and is now back for vengeance.

**8. "What's Got into Them"** Written by Lee Goldberg and William Rabkin; Story by Gabe Torres, Lee Goldberg, and William Rabkin; Directed by Dennis Abey; airdate: January 12, 1991; *Guest Cast*: Peter Cellier (Mason); Jo Anderson (Sarah); Richard Pearce (Salisbury); Alan Wilson (Old Man); Holly Abey (Little Girl); Alan Stuart (Stunts).

A vicious chase and a brutal double murder take an odd turn when the spirits of the pursuer and prey leave their physical (now deceased) bodies and switch suddenly into new ones. These two hostile enemies find their way to the Matheson Bed and Breakfast at the same time that Ian's pompous mentor in mythology, Professor Mason, arrives in town to offer Ian a job at Oxford. One spirit possesses Mum Matheson and makes her act in a provocative fashion, while the other takes her husband's body and plans to kill her. Mum Matheson claims to be Sarah Bloom, a spirit whose abusive husband is preventing her from going through her portal and crossing over into a peaceful afterlife, but that is not quite the truth, as Ian and Randi discover.

**9. "Can't Keep a Dead Man Down" (Part I)** Written by Lee Goldberg and William Rabkin; Directed by Roger Cheveley; airdate: November 20, 1990; *Guest Cast*: Rolf Saxon (Charlie Beaudine); Sally Faulkner (Samantha Stevens); Gary Olsen.

Monumental Pictures wants to make a movie out of Ian's book, *Satan's Sex Slaves*, and the studio sends an agent to London to negotiate. Unfortunately, the agent is Randi's old boyfriend from Los Angeles, Charlie Beaudine. Worse, the university thinks that Ian's new book is "degenerate" and his department head, Samantha Stevens, fires him. Just when it looks like things cannot get any worse, the dead start to rise from their graves, Dr. Stevens attempts to steal the all-powerful staff of Gilgamesh, and Ian is stabbed to death!

**10. "Can't Keep a Dead Man Down" (Part II)** Written by Lee Goldberg and William Rabkin; Directed by Roger Cheveley; airdate: November 27, 1990; *Guest Cast*: Rolf Saxon (Charlie Beaudine); Sally Faulkner (Samantha Stevens); Jane Cunliffe (Anne); Andrew Lodge (Pilot); Mark Collingwood (Co-pilot); Sarah Sherbourne (The Guide); Paul Keown (Tourist); Doug Brazier (Passenger); Craig Edwards (Reporter); Diane Youdale (She Wolf); Andy Bradford, Nick Wilkinson, Tom Lucy (Stunts).

With Ian dead, Randi flies back to the United States, but it is a full moon above and Randi transforms into a werewolf in the lavatory as the plane sets down. Randi soon returns to the United Kingdom, desperate and alone without Ian. Meanwhile, Ian returns from the grave a rotting corpse with an appetite for human flesh, and Randi swears to help him become human again. The key to doing so rests with the staff of Gilgamesh, but an army of the walking dead under Stevens' power is already en

route to the museum to steal the valuable artifact.

**11. “Big Top She Wolf”** Written by Kate Boutilier; Directed by Brian Grant; airdate: January 19, 1991; *Guest Cast:* Jason Carter (Caleb Wakefield); Mark Dawson (Danny Farrell); Chloe Treend (The Sexy, Sensational, Swinging Selena); Diane Youdale (She Wolf); Andy Bradford (Stunts); And the Performers of the Jay Miller Circus.

A circus arrives in town and the whole Matheson family is excited about taking Randi on her first visit to the Big Top ... but this is no ordinary carnival. An evil ringmaster is stealing the souls of youngsters and Randi begins to feel strangely attracted to this dark figure. She visits the circus alone one night and then goes out with him again the next night. Ian grows jealous, especially when Caleb Wakefield seems able to cure Randi of her werewolf affliction.

**12. “She Devil”** Written by Lee Goldberg and William Rabkin; Directed by Dennis Abey; airdate: January 26, 1991; *Guest Cast:* Natalie Forbes (Kristin McCord); Kevin Drinkwater (Ed Decker); Tony Hughes (Tom Nile); Sion Tudor Owen (Peter); Don Gallagher (Dave); Martin Dee (Repairman); Diane Youdale (She Wolf); Andy Bradford and Elaine Ford (Stunts).

A lonely bachelor is killed after answering a personal ad in the newspaper. Ian and Randi trace the ad to a college love of Ian’s who has developed a special pheromone potion which brings out the “sexual animal” in people. To prove that this new aphrodisiac, Oxypolymorphene 29, is nothing but a placebo, Ian drinks down a vial and becomes a fanged, hairy, supersexed beast. Randi captures Ian and chains him, but must find a way to stop his old flame from killing again, even as a full moon looms on the horizon.

**13. “Voodoo Child”** Written by Terry Erwin; Directed by Roger Cheveley; airdate: February 2, 1991; *Guest Cast:* Keith Edwards (Greg); Stephen Tredre (Phil); Kim Fenton (Page); Debra Beaumont (Laura); Kim Fenton (Page); Simon Jessop (Tim); Amber Beezer (Maggie); Christopher Benjamin (Dr. Morris); Diane Youdale (She Wolf); Andy Bradford, Steve Whyment (Stunts).

While Randi suffers from a painful toothache (and a deadly fear of dentists), Ian is accosted by a know-it-all student in his mythology class who claims that he knows all about the voodoo use of an obscure Indian cult. Hoping to get out of her appointment with the dentist, Randi befriends the student, Greg, and joins his after-hours study group. Before long, Greg has used his voodoo powers to determine that Randi is a werewolf, and worse, randomly spur her transformation into the she wolf. Ian sets about to save Randi from the evil study group, but even if he can, Randi has a date with destiny ... and her dentist.

**14. “Beyond the Beyond”** Written by Lee Goldberg and William Rabkin; Story by Lee Goldberg, William Rabkin, and Arthur Sellers; Directed by Brian Grant; airdate: February 9, 1991; *Guest Cast:* Nicole (Kate Harper); Edward DeSouza (Captain Pierce/Guy Goddard); High Walters (Mr. Snork); Robert McBain (Gorilla/Conrad Stipe); Graham Seed (Winthrop); Gordon Milne (Jim); Mark Drewry (Geek).

Ian and Randi get an all-expense paid trip to a sci-fi convention to celebrate the 25th anniversary of a cheesy genre TV show called *Beyond the Beyond*. Ian is there to present a speech about his book, but he finds that his TV-watching audience is less-than-appreciative. Conrad Stipe, the creator of *Beyond the Beyond*, is unexpectedly killed after announcing production of a motion picture featuring an all-

new cast. Randi and Aunt Elsa hunt down the killer among the original cast while a reluctant Ian is hired to write the screenplay for the big-screen adventure.

• *Love and Curses (1991)*

**15. “Curiosity Killed the Cravitz”** Written by Lee Goldberg and William Rabkin; Directed by Brian Grant; airdate: March 6, 1991; *Guest Cast:* Milton Selzer (The Wizard); Paul Williams (Harvey); Eileen Seeley (Cathy); David Alan Brooks, Mary-Ellen Dunbar (Mrs. Cravitz); Robert Roitblatt (Marty).

The university is phasing out the department of mythology so Ian is out of a job. At the same time, an American friend of Randi’s is killed in Los Angeles by neighbors whom she claimed are “space aliens.” Randi and Ian travel to the west coast of the United States to help, and Ian hopes to get his movie deal revived but ends up with his own talk show (*How Strange with Dr. Ian Matheson*) on Channel 89. As it turns out, the neighbors are not aliens, but trolls from the center of the Earth who are replacing suburbanites with troll replicas.

**16. “Habeas Corpses”** Written by Lee Goldberg and William Rabkin; Directed by Chuck Bowman; airdate: March 13, 1991; *Guest Cast:* Barry Van Dyke (Allan Decker); Robert Dorfman (Horace Menzies); Marta Du Bois (Mrs. Chambers); Sandra Kerns (Wife); David Sage, Lela Ivey.

After a taping of *How Strange* (in which a blond woman reports she is the last surviving person of a vast undersea kingdom), Ian takes Randi to their new apartment. As they are touring it, a man runs into their new home and promptly dies ... after reporting that he has been bitten by a vampire.

Ian and Randi pursue the story and end up staking the dead man’s wife ... who really was a vampire. The trail of bloodsuckers leads to an evil law firm where the attorneys are all undead.

**17. “Bride of the Wolfman”** Written by Kate Boutilier; Directed by Bruce Seth Green; airdate: March 20, 1991; *Guest Cast:* Tony Amendola (Dr. Pretorious); Gayle Cohen (Elizabeth); Joe Bova (Oscar); Howard George (George); Michael Berryman (Monster); Tracey Walter (Boris); Roy Abramsohn.

Randi and Ian visit the Granada Theater an hour before it is to be torn down. Once inside, the doors to the auditorium close and a film, *Bride of the Wolfman*, unspools on the screen. In a flash of light, Randi and Ian find themselves inside the old film, and in old-fashioned black and white to boot! Somehow they have entered the film *Bride of the Werewolf*, and found themselves at the dangerous home of the villainous Dr. Pretorious.

**18. “Heart Attack”** Written by Lee Goldberg and William Rabkin; Directed by Chuck Bowman; airdate: March 27, 1991; *Guest Cast:* Kim Morgan Greene (Rowena); Tod Susman (Al).

A bitter cupid “gone bad” uses her considerable powers to destroy the lives of those she should be helping to find love. Ian and Randi get involved (reluctantly) as the bad cupid, a female named Rowena, tangles with a good cupid, a guy named Al. Before long, the war of the cupids ends up on the stage of *How Strange*, and love and hate are flying back and forth through the studio like laser bolts.

**19. “Eclipse”** Written by Richard Manning and Hans Beimler; Directed by Gary Walkow; airdate: April 10, 1991; *Guest Cast:* Jan Munroe (Agent Thompson); Barbara Tarbuck (Dr. Horton); Gregg



Berger (Dirk); Merle Kennedy (Betsy).

A full eclipse spurs the worst case of PLS (prelycanthropy syndrome) in a confused Randi. The state of the moon also causes the she wolf to transform back and forth, seemingly at random. Hoping to get away from it all, Randi ends up in the Paradise Institute, which is actually a CIA research front. The agents there are searching for their “ultimate” weapon, and they have found it in the she wolf of London.

**20. “Mystical Pizza”** Written by Lee Goldberg and William Rabkin; Directed by Bruce Seth Green; airdate: April 2, 1991; *Guest Cast:* Kim Lankford, Lynn Lllellwyn, Brenda Varda (Witches); Matt E. Levin (Craig Marcus).

Three witches have decided to serve their foul brew to unwitting customers at a ... chi-chi L.A. pizzeria. One of their patrons, Skip Seville, is fed a pizza which will turn him into a rat. Randi and Ian attempt to reverse the spell and save Skip, but the witches offer Randi a cure for lycanthropy.

## ***Stephen King's The Golden Years (1991)***

### **CRITICAL RECEPTION**

“definitely King territory. The prototypically pedestrian is constantly bumping into the decidedly eccentric, if not supernatural.... Mr. King, it seems, has decided to have a go at the old fountain-of-youth routine that seems to be curiously obsessive these days.”—John J. O’Connor, *The New York Times*: “He’s Not Getting Better, He’s Only Getting Younger,” July 16, 1991, Page C13.

“In many ways, it’s a typical King Kreation: brand name in the title, spooky premise ... rock & roll on the soundtrack.... As in the best of King’s work, the author contrasts supernatural doings with ordinary life and the scenes here that establish Harlan and Gina are touching without succumbing to sentimentality.... The writer’s achievement here is to have provided us with the video equivalent of a good summer read—*Golden Years* is entertaining and substantial at the same time.”—Ken Tucker, *Entertainment Weekly*: “King’s Golden Touch,” July 12, 1991.

“In *Golden Years*, Stephen King provides viewers everywhere ... prime time hours useful only in catching up on one’s sleep ... one more major snooze job cranked out by a person who is undeniably one of the greatest writers alive ... boring beyond belief.”—William Anchors, *Epilog* #32, July 1993.

“one of Stephen King’s more eccentric creations, though ultimately a failed one ... various factions provide for a lively chase and intriguing characters, but where the script goes wrong is in not developing the fantasy elements. While the payoff is a disappointing one ... individual moments make up for some of the letdown.”—John Stanley, *Creature Features Strike Again*, page 370.

“There aren’t many King-size chills here, and it’s hard to see how this thin premise can remain intriguing.”—Craig Tomashoff, *People*, July 15, 1991, page 9.

### **FORMAT**

Feisty janitor Harlan Williams is prepared to turn 71 years old—well into his “golden years”—but he is not ready to give up his job or his active life. Unfortunately, Harlan works at Falco Plains, a military base in Maine where top secret “Gold Series” experiments are being conducted. One day, at this high security installation, Harlan is exposed to a green “glow” following an explosion in the lab of Dr. Todhunter. Before long, Harlan and his wife Gina are noticing strange changes: those wrinkles on his face are straightening out with alarming regularity, and his white hair is turning brown. This “fountain of youth” effect caused by a “particle accelerator” in the lab does not go unnoticed, and soon “The Shop,” a black ops organization, sends its most vicious and cunning agent, Jude Andrews, to straighten things out. With the help of the beautiful Terry Spann, head of security at Falco Plains, Harlan and his wife Gina hit the road, trying to get used to a life on the run when they should be enjoying their retirement.

Besides featuring Williams, Jude, and Terry Spann in major roles, this CBS 1991 summer series also features Dr. Todhunter, the ultimate mad scientist, Major Moreland, the officious personnel supervisor at Falco Plains, and General Crewes, a man who eventually becomes an ally to the fleeing

Williams clan. This “novel for television,” as Stephen King called it, also featured the song “The Golden Years” as its theme song, sung by David Bowie.

## HISTORY

As its title indicates, *Stephen King’s The Golden Years* is the brainchild of America’s reigning king of horror, the über-writer responsible for best-selling novels such as *Cujo*, *Salem’s Lot*, *The Shining*, *Christine*, *Carrie*, *Pet Sematary*, *Misery*, *Dolores Claiborne*, and the like. Though King’s record in print was (and is) unimpeachable, his record on film and TV is not nearly so solid. *Firestarter* (1984), *Maximum Overdrive* (1985), *Silver Bullet* (1986), and *Sleepwalkers* (1982) are just a few King film projects which failed to live up to audience (and financial) expectations.

In the late ’80s, network television was entering a phase that some academic sources have termed a second golden age. *Hill Street Blues*, *Thirtysomething*, and *St. Elsewhere* brought mature drama to the tube as never before, *The Cosby Show* and *Family Ties* were sitcoms worthy of praise, Michael Mann’s *Miami Vice* regularly employed cinematic technique and style, and David Lynch’s quirky *Twin Peaks* demonstrated that dramatic programs need not be pigeonholed by strict TV conventions and traditions. Indeed, quirky and offbeat were in, and “the powers that be” noted that film director David Lynch (with *Peaks*) had suddenly imbued television with a new freedom. Hoping to cash in on the “cult” and “bizarre” (but nonetheless immensely popular) aspects of *Twin Peaks*, some executives believed that by recruiting other big name talent (from films and the publishing world), they would ensure a similar success. Imitation is, after all, the sincerest form of flattery. Thus Wes Craven landed on TV under the auspices of NBC to create his *Nightmare Cafe*, Dan Curtis was corralled by Brandon Tartikoff into doing a big budget, prime-time remake of *Dark Shadows*, and last but not least, CBS hired Stephen King to create a kind of “novel for television,” a project called *The Golden Years*. As King himself noted at the time, *Twin Peaks* was a brand name on nearly everybody’s mind:

Up until *Twin Peaks* came on, the only sort of continuing drama that TV understood was soap opera, *Dallas*, *Knots Landing*.... To some degree, David Lynch gave them that. But he turned the whole idea ... inside out like a sock. *Golden Years* is like *Twin Peaks* without the delirium.<sup>1</sup>

Keeping in mind television’s “loosening” up, King adapted an old novel idea he had kept under wraps for some time, and penned the first five episodes of *The Golden Years*, while simultaneously outlining the last two. The series was filmed in Wilmington, N.C., the same location where *Maximum Overdrive* had been lensed, and the project teamed King with Richard Rubenstein and Laurel, the producer and company responsible for *Tales from the Darkside* and *Monsters*. Frances Sternhagen (*Outland* [1981]), who had recently starred in the adaptation of Stephen King’s *Misery* (1990), was the biggest star in the cast, with relative unknowns such as Felicity Huffman, Keith Szarabajka, and Bill Raymond performing the remaining lead roles. Stephen King even turned up for a cameo appearance (as a bus driver) in the fifth episode aired. The subject of the short-lived series was a laboratory accident which turned septuagenarian janitor Harlan Williams into a kind of living fountain of youth. Also on hand from previous King works was the nefarious organization, “The Shop,” which had been written of in *Firestarter* and others.

*The Golden Years* was filmed in May of 1991, and aired during the summer (July) of 1991, a strategy which would heighten its chances of solid ratings. When CBS aired the program on Tuesday nights at 9:00, it was hoped that it would draw huge audiences since technically it was still the middle of rerun season. Such was not the case, however, and after initial curiosity viewing of the premiere, ratings

plummeted rapidly, despite the lack of competition. After six weeks on the air and seven hours aired, *Stephen King's The Golden Years* ended with a bizarre conclusion which left much unexplained and unresolved but which nonetheless left room for a continuation ... though such a continuation never came.

Because *The Golden Years* bears Stephen King's name so prominently, it escaped TV oblivion and was wrapped into a four-hour movie, and released directly to video by Worldvision. This version is the one available in most video stores, and it crops much footage from the series proceedings (making the show even more confusing in its narrative), and provides a new, but equally ambiguous, ending. Many sources today list *The Golden Years* as a "miniseries" to soften the blow of its failure, but the show proceeded in a one-hour episodic form, and was always intended to continue in the same format should it have been successful. Thus *The Golden Years* shared the same fate as *Dark Shadows* and *Nightmare Cafe*, the other programs which followed immediately upon *Twin Peaks*' heels: quick termination. Imitation, though a sincere form of flattery, also happened to be the most obvious.

### CRITICAL COMMENTARY

Perhaps Stephen King's greatest gift as a writer is his ability to mix the mundane with the monstrous. *Cujo* is a brilliant (and terrifying) novel which first establishes the lives (and illicit loves) of its lead characters, and then jumps whole hog into terror when a rabid dog attacks one of those characters and traps her in a parked car. The woman, the love affair, the sick dog ... it all felt real, and thus all the more powerful and horrifying. What seems to be missing from *Stephen King's The Golden Years* is that same feeling that the central characters are real people, living real lives. Dr. Richard X. Todhunter, for example, is a comic book mad scientist, an exaggerated stereotype. He is obviously mad, with fluffed-up, crazy hair (as if he's stuck a finger in an electric socket), and cartoonish in the extreme. He is played by Bill Raymond without nuance, without any sense of "reality." The intent may have been to make the character "quirky," like the inhabitants of *Twin Peaks*, but he comes off as a walking-talking cartoon, a cliché, rather than an interesting human being. Every scene is played over-the-top, and misses the mark of believability by miles. This statement is not meant to pillory Raymond; the same observation could be made of much of *The Golden Years* cast. Major Moreland (portrayed by Stephen Root) is one of those standby King villains: a bureaucratic monster, an officious little pain in the ass of a man who loves to heap misery on others. The question is: why? And again, the performance is so one-dimensional, so-over-the-top, that all of his scenes border on satire. Again, it is important to note that satire is fine (and another important element of *Twin Peaks*) but the actual storyline of *The Golden Years* is handled so seriously, with such grimness, that the comic-book characters do not seem to fit with the grand plan. Felicity Huffman is fun to watch as Terry Spann, but she too is chewing the scenery like a B-movie actress, playing a drop-dead gorgeous, tough-talking dame to the hilt. This lack of believability in performance is why some of King's adaptations inevitably fail on the big screen: what seems well-written and "real" on the page can be frightfully overblown on the stage.

Of all the characters in *The Golden Years*, only Frances Sternhagen registers as an interesting, realistic human being. She plays Gina, Harlan's wife, and she is able to express appropriate fear and sadness in her role. More than Harlan himself, Sternhagen's character expresses the tragedy of his situation. She understands that because her husband is growing younger and she is not, their marriage will soon fall apart. Fate has taken a cruel turn and separated them in a way that even death would not. "You're one of the people on the boat, and I'm one of the people on the pier ... and the water between us is getting

wider, and soon you'll be gone," she expresses to her husband at one especially poignant moment in the action. In that instant of recognition, King's scenario finally takes flight because the human dimension of the story is neither slighted nor exaggerated. These two old people should be the core of the story, the heart of the drama, but they are constantly asked to play second fiddle to the "espionage" and "chase" aspects of the story.

One review of *Stephen King's The Golden Years* which is quoted above alleges that the series is boring. Although the reviewer does not say why this is so, he certainly has a valid point. For long stretches of the story, the viewer is left with nothing interesting to get a hook on. R.D. Call makes for a rather subdued villain, Jude Andrews, and Ed Lauter as General Crewes plays an uninteresting military man ... both, again, without much nuance or verisimilitude. A great deal of screen time is wasted on *The Golden Years* as these two characters lock horns. Additionally, there is very little physical action on this series. Though Jude eliminates several people (blowing up their cars, murdering an optometrist in his office, and so forth) the story never really gets moving in a significant or meaningful manner. It is not until the final episode of the series that the chase finally heats up and feels like an immediate threat. And by then, no one really cares anymore.

The scientific angles of the story are also given short shrift. Dr. Todhunter runs an experiment with a "red board," and subsequently there is an explosion at his particle accelerator. That explosion affects Harlan, causing him to grow younger and to glow green at times. Beyond that, there is little explanation for any of the events, except the ridiculously vague description that Todhunter's experiment concerned "regeneration." That might as well be an in-joke reference to *Doctor Who* as it is a legitimate scientific explanation of the events at hand.

The horror of *The Golden Years* should have been a very human one, always the best kind, and Frances Sternhagen does manage to give it distinguished voice as Gina Williams. Imagine that you have lived your whole life, and are ready for retirement when something happens to take away that retirement, your home, your wife, your very life. Harlan becomes a man in a trap, whose only choice is to run for his life when he should be enjoying his "golden years." "The Shop" wants him destroyed, and besides, he lives in a dehumanized world of security checkpoints, video cameras, thumbprint and voice identification, and a talking female computer who monitors his whereabouts at Falco Plains. By highlighting this scenario of technology gone awry, *The Golden Years* plays as a kind of *1984* meets *The Prisoner* meets *The Fugitive*. In leaving a computerized society, Harlan must then run for his life from his own hapless pursuer, that old cliché, in this case Jude Andrews. Though this scenario is certainly workable, indeed it has been done many times, it is hardly the innovative ground-breaker that *Twin Peaks* was. Perhaps that is why viewers abandoned it so quickly and so totally. In essence, *The Golden Years* was the same old chase show as *The Fugitive*, *The Incredible Hulk*, *Werewolf*, and others. And, even though it was a courageous choice for King to put two senior citizens in lead roles, that choice may not have made the series widely appealing to many genre fans. One must wonder why, as well, that Keith Szarabajka, a young man, was cast as Harlan. Although the intent was for him to grow younger and shed the old age makeup, imagine how much more powerful the series could have been with an established older actor in the role. Jason Robards, Richard Farnsworth, William Dysart, and Pat Hingle are just a few performers who, having lived a long life, could have brought that experience into their scenes with Sternhagen. Szarabajka is not bad, it is just that his makeup is obvious, and it seems an odd choice to play a young man (Szarabajka) beside an old woman (Sternhagen). Szarabajka's body looks too healthy, too athletic to belong to a seventy-year-old man, and no amount of makeup can hide the fact that the actor's carriage is all wrong for an old man. On

top of all those problems, there are only few special effects in *The Golden Years*, making the show seem more like an espionage program than either science fiction or terror TV.

A dull program populated with over-the-top performers, an overused concept, and little or no action makes *Stephen King's The Golden Years* one of the worst entries of modern terror TV. Most disturbing of all, this is a series which expresses no curiosity about its subject matter. A man is able to have the "clock turned back" for him, yet how does he really feel about it? We know how his wife feels, but how does Harlan feel? Before the accident, his eyesight was failing, his hair had gone white, and he was facing death. Would there not have been some part of him that was thrilled to have a second chance, to shed old age like an unwanted jacket and to live again? What would be the advantages of living a life all over again, this time having the benefit of experience? The disadvantages? *The Golden Years* never takes the time or expends the energy to answer these questions in an interesting or touching way. If it had spent more time on its "fountain of youth" notion and less time on the Machiavellian maneuvering of "The Shop," it might have been a much better series. This author has no doubt that Stephen King has the talent to create a terrific TV series, but *The Golden Years* is past its prime by at least twenty years.

### CAST AND CREDITS

*Cast:* Keith Szarabajka (Harlan Williams); Felicity Huffman (Terry Spann); Frances Sternhagen (Gina Williams); Ed Lauter (General Lewis Crewes); R.D. Call (Jude Andrews); Bill Raymond (Dr. Richard X. Todhunter).

*Credits:* Created by: Stephen King. Based on a story by: Stephen King. Executive Producers: Stephen King, Richard Rubinstein. Producers: Mitchell Galin, Peter R. MacIntosh. Supervising Producer: Josef Anderson. Director of Photography: Alex Nepomiaschy. Production Designer: Jeremy Conway. Editors (various episodes): Richard Harkness, Michael Kewley, Stephen Marks. Music: Joe Taylor. Casting: Lynn Kressel. Costume Designer: Gilda Texter. Unit Production Manager: David Hartley. First Assistant Directors: Steve Apicella, Lisa Zimble. Second Assistant Directors: Cas Donovan and Maria Nelograne. Special Makeup Consultant: Dick Smith. Harlan's Makeup Designed by: Carl Fullerton, Neal Martz. Harlan's Makeup Applied by: Todd Kleitsch, Neal Martz. Special Hairstylist: William A. Farley. Sound Mixer: Felipe Borrero. Script Supervisor: Lynne Twentyman. Makeup Artist: Rudolph R. Eavey III. Hair Stylist: Tena Parker. Gaffer: Joseph Warren. Key Grip: Scott R. Davis. Camera Operator: Javier Carbo. Set Decorator: Linda Lee Sutton. Prop Master: Tantar LeViseur III. Art Director: Kim Jennings. Optical Coordinator: Gus Patrick Ramsden. Model Maker: Eric Skipper. Construction Coordinator: John Thomas Jones Jr. Scenic Change: Paul W. Oliver. Location Manager: Anne Stewart. Production Coordinator: Mitchell E. Dauterive. Wardrobe Supervisor: Patsy C. Rainey. Transportation Coordinator: Neil Hyman. Production Accountant: Tamara Bally Boneich. Casting Associate: Suzanne Ryan. Special Effects: Steve Kirschhoff. Stunt Coordinator: Jerry Hewitt. Local Casting: Fincannon and Associates. Production Executive: Diane Vilagi. Production Consultant: Jo Recht. Production Assistant: Kim Lombardi. Assistant to Mr. Rubinstein: Rosane McCarron. Assistant to Mr. Galin: Linda Housworth. Post-Production Supervisor: John Cardock. Editing Facilities: Telstar Editing. Video Effects: Paul Srp. Color: Manhattan Transfer/Edit. Colorist: John Zaik. Film Processing: Technicolor, N.Y. Sound Facility: Sync Sound, Inc. Sound Editor: Rick Wesler, Pam Bartella, Tracy Martinson. Rerecording Mixer: Ken Hahn, Grant Maxwell, Michael Ruschak. Additional Sound Design: Fred Szymanski, Jan Mizumachi. Music Engineer: Ricky Bett. Theme Music: "The Golden Years" by David Bowie. A Laurel Production, a

## EPISODE GUIDE

**1. Episode #1 (two hours)** Written by Stephen King; Directed by Ken Fink; airdate: July 16, 1991; *Guest Cast:* Matt Malloy (Dr. Redding); Adam Redfield (Jackson); Peter McRobbie (Lt. McGiver); John Rothman (Dr. Ackerman); Stephen Root (Major Moreland); J.R. Horne (Dr. Eakins); Jeff Williams (Lt. Vester); Sarah Melici (Mrs. Rogers); Phil Lenkowsky (Billy); Lili Bernard (Nurse); Rick Warner, Mark Miller, Graham Smith (Shop Operatives); Michael Burgess (Soldier).

Seventy-one-year-old janitor Harlan Williams may lose his job at Falco Plains Research Center because of his faltering eyesight, but all that changes when the mad Dr. Todhunter's secret "Gold Series" experiment with a particle accelerator goes awry. Now the department of defense, as well as a black ops unit called "The Shop" are most interested in Harlan's progress, because he was affected during the experiment's trial run and subsequent explosion. Now, Harlan's eyes seem to glow green and he is aging in reverse ... growing younger.

**2. Episode #2** Written by Stephen King; Directed by Allen Coulter; airdate: July 18, 1991; *Guest Cast:* John Rothman (Dr. Ackerman); J.R. Horne (Dr. Eakins); Stephen Root (Major Moreland); Phil Lenkowsky (Billy); Graham Paul (Rick Haverford); Cathleen Cohen (Receptionist); Susan King (Nurse); Richard Olsen (Watchman); Kathleen Piche (Rita).

Terry Spann, head of security at the Falco Plains center, investigates Dr. Todhunter's role in the accident which injured Harlan. Arriving on the scene to "help" is Jude Andrews, a trench-coat garbed "Shop" operative with a penchant for cleaning up problems and silencing enemies ... permanently. Meanwhile, Gina Williams, Harlan's wife, starts to notice brown in Harlan's hair and other signs that he is becoming younger.

**3. Episode #3** Written by Stephen King; Directed by Michael Gornick; airdate: July 25, 1991; *Guest Cast:* Tim Guinee (Fredericks); Mert Hatfield (Sheriff); Brad Greenquist (Dent); Michael P. Moran (Trucker); Alberto Vazquez (Janitor); Stephen Ayers (Cop); Pat Brady (Security Guard); Steve Coley (Boy); Bob Pentz (State Trooper).

Assassin Jude Andrews is systematically eliminating and silencing all of those people who might be able to stop or threaten the progress of the Gold Series experiment at Falco Plains. Harlan has begun to grow suspicious that he is being watched and observed, and Terry Spann defects to tell him and Gina that their lives are in danger from "The Shop," confirming Harlan's worst fears. Harlan and Gina pack up their things and hit the road with Terry, hoping they can escape the ever-watchful eye of Jude.

**4. Episode #4** Written by Stephen King; Directed by Allen Coulter; airdate August 1, 1991; *Guest Cast:* Tim Guinee (Fredericks); Mert Hatfield (Sheriff); John Rothman (Dr. Ackerman); Susan King (Nurse); Don Bland (Tech); Todd Brenner (Man); Tim Parati (Attendant); Randell Haynes (Hawkins); Phil Lenkowsky (Billy); Graham Paul (Rick); David Dwyer (Father); Rick Zieff (Paramedic).

Gina and Harlan have fled their home for the open road, with Terry serving as their constant protector. Jude is deep in cover-up territory now, blaming Harlan's "senile dementia" for the murder of an optometrist who knew too much about Harlan's strange condition. The fugitives trade cars at North Gate Mall, exchanging Terry's car for a hearse, and then hide at an abandoned rural farm. As Harlan

and Terry develop a kind of mutual respect, Gina starts to feel old, useless, and left out.

**5. Episode #5** Written by Stephen King; Directed by Stephen Tolkin; airdate: August 8, 1991; *Guest Cast:* Stephen Root (Major Moreland); Eric King (Burton); Paul Butler (Captain Marsh); Tim Guinee (Fredericks); Dylan Haggerty, Josh Liveright, Matthew Ryan, Josh Fardon (Troopers); Stephen King (Bus Driver); Josef Anderson (Janitor); Caroline Diller (Girl); Sarah Melici (Mrs. Rogers); Graham Richards (Lab Technician).

General Crewes, the man in charge at Falco Plains, splits with Jude, tired of his lies, deceit, and brutal tactics, and sets out to assist Terry and the Williamses. Meanwhile, Harlan separates from Terry and Gina, who boarded a bus for his daughter's home in Chicago. Harlan hitchhikes to the same destination while Jude and his team intensify their search for the janitor who has inadvertently been affected by Dr. Todhunter's fountain of youth. Crewes attempts to short-circuit Jude's search by shutting down administration at Falco Plains, and deleting Harlan Williams' file from Central Records so Jude cannot discover the home address of Harlan's daughter, Francie.

**6. Episode #6** written by Josef Anderson; Directed by Michael Gornick airdate: August 15, 1991; *Guest Cast:* Stephen Root (Major Moreland); Eric King (Burton); Harriet Sansom Harris (Francie Williams); Kaiulani Lee (Cybil); Phil Lenkowsky (Billy DeLois); Randell Haynes (Yaniger); Jonathan Teague Cook (Captain); Peter McIntosh (Shop Commandant); Stephanie Rogers, Jason Robards III, G.W. Rooney (Hippies).

Crewes hopes to beat Jude and his minions to the home of Harlan and Gina's daughter in Chicago. Gina and Terry arrive safely at Francie's house while Harlan's unusual condition causes strange electrical disturbances on the truck he has hitched a ride on. While Todhunter attempts to re-create the experiment which caused Harlan's malady in the first place, Francie learns of her parent's predicament and hides them, with Terry and Crewes in tow, at a modern day hippie commune. Jude lays siege to the hippie house, and the final confrontation begins.



## *Dark Shadows* (1991)

### CRITICAL RECEPTION

“This new *Dark Shadows* is slicker, sexier, and, of course, more violent, with lots of gory special effects.... Bats, dead rats and scorpions abound, supplemented with eerie music.... Then, unfortunately, there is the story proper. Compared with such current horror romps as HBO’s *Tales from the Crypt* or even the syndicated *Dracula: The Series*, *Dark Shadows* is pretty thin gruel. Not helping matters is a cast that seems largely to have been recruited ... from out-of-town beauty pageants.”—John J. O’Connor, *The New York Times*, January 11, 1991.

“brought a new sense of horror and darkness to the sanguinary history of a family of vampires. Barnabas Collins is not here as Jonathan Frid (that part passed to Ben Cross) and that may disappoint fans—but those same fans should be happy about this well-produced, atmospheric and oppressive fang fantasy.”—John Stanley, *Creature Features Movie Guide Strikes Again*, 1994, page 94.

“The opening movie and subsequent series ran along more or less the same lines as the original show, shamelessly plundering it for many of its better storylines, including the flashback sequences.... Curtis’s new series had the two commodities that the original had lacked—time and money. The acting was impeccable and the location filming moody and atmospheric, but at the same time the show was cold, hollow and lifeless.”—John Ainsworth, *TV Zone Special #7: “Dark Shadows,”* November 1992, page 19.

### FORMAT

*Dark Shadows* is a love story of sorts. Victoria Winters, a lovely young teacher, travels to the mysterious Collinwood Estate in New England to tutor young David Collins. Unexpectedly, she finds love with a 200-year-old vampire, Barnabas Collins. Of course, love is never really that touching unless it happens to be tragic love, and in this case, the lore of Victoria and Barnabas is filled with pathos. Victoria, you see, is a dead ringer for Barnabas’s one great true love of the past: Josette DuPres. Worse, Barnabas is afraid to let himself grow too close to Victoria because he is a bloodsucker, a vampire who could kill Victoria as easily as kiss her.

Surrounding these two star-crossed lovers, there is a great deal of intrigue and a large supporting cast of characters. Dr. Julia Hoffman knows that Barnabas is a vampire, and is attempting to cure him of his ungodly affliction. Unfortunately, she is also in love with Barnabas and unwilling to complete a treatment which, in the end, will send him into the arms of Victoria. There is also Willie Loomis, the goodhearted but not very bright man who released Barnabas from his tomb in the first place and now serves him, Sarah, the ghost of a little girl who warns Victoria and others of the evil at Collinwood, family matriarch Elizabeth Stoddard, and, of course, Angelique, the evil witch who cursed Barnabas to vampirism in the first place, way back in the year 1790.

These are the main threads of the 1990s revival of *Dark Shadows*. Interestingly, the series takes place simultaneously in two disparate time periods: the 1990s, wherein a love-lorn Barnabas seeks to be cured in order to marry Victoria Winters, and the 1790s, wherein a human Barnabas loses his great

love Josette and is transformed into a murderous vampire. The time travel aspect of this unusual, gothic soap opera is accomplished through a séance: Victoria Winters disappears into the past and a frightened 1790s woman, Phyllis Wicke, materializes in her place in the present.

Unlike the daytime soap from which it sprang, each installment of the 1990s *Dark Shadows* runs for an hour. However, in respect to the landmark first series, this remake opens with the same creepy theme music, the same (though in color) shots of ocean water crashing furiously against the rocks of Widow's Hill, and the familiar opening narration popularized by the first show, which began "My name is Victoria Winters, and ..." etc.

## HISTORY

Popular legends and cultural icons pop out of the strangest and most unexpected sources. Who would have predicted that a seldom-seen, poorly rated "outer space" series called *Star Trek* would survive its cancellation after three measly years on the air only to prosper in the 1980s and 90s with no less than nine feature films, three spin-offs, and a billion dollar grossing merchandise line which has come to include everything from action figures and bed sheets to a *Star Trek* china pattern (from Pfaltzgraff) and shower curtains?

There is little doubt that the daytime genre soap opera *Dark Shadows* (1966-71) is the terror TV equivalent of the cult *Star Trek*: an unheralded, low-budget series which has surpassed its short life on the air to become a cottage industry in and of itself. Perhaps the two series have even more in common than it first appears: both premiered in 1966, and both champion the perspective of an outsider to mainstream society, either the half-Vulcan Mr. Spock (Leonard Nimoy) or the tortured vampire of *Dark Shadows*, Barnabas Collins (Jonathan Frid). Upon further examination, these two actors even resemble each other a bit: dark, intense, brooding, and handsome in a mysterious, sullen way. Indeed, it is not much of a stretch to see Frid as a Vulcan, or Nimoy as a vampire.

Dan Curtis is the creator of the original *Dark Shadows* and its 1991 television remake. Famous in horror circles for producing the two memorable "Kolchak" telefilms of the early '70s (*The Night Stalker*, *The Night Strangler*), as well as *Trilogy of Terror* with Karen Black and others, Curtis has been described by no less a horror authority than Stephen King as having an "unerring, crude talent for finding the terror place inside you and squeezing it with a cold hand."<sup>1</sup> Amazingly, this propensity for scaring people seems to have developed in the most unlikely venue: a low-budget ABC daytime drama which, from its outset, never wanted to be considered horror. On the contrary, when the soap opera *Dark Shadows* premiered on June 27, 1966, it was a gothic romance firmly in the tradition of *Rebecca* (1940) or *Jane Eyre*. It was not until almost a year later (the following April) that the popular character of Barnabas Collins, a vampire, was added to the format. The inclusion of this reluctant vampire made all the difference in audience acceptance, and *Dark Shadows*' Nielsen ratings shot into the sky like a rocket. So popular was the new character (and actor) that other supernatural entities such as ghosts and werewolves soon abounded on the unlikely drama. This daring gambit, which Dan Curtis readily admits stemmed from desperation, worked so well that by the year 1970, *Dark Shadows* was attracting an audience of more than 15 million viewers, and the production was receiving 5,000 cards and letters a week from excited fans who wanted to know everything about Barnabas and the gifted actor who portrayed him.<sup>2</sup>

In today's terms, these are simply amazing figures, especially when one considers that the average

weekly audience for *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* or *Charmed* is just four or five million, and that both of the aforementioned shows are considered runaway hits for the WB. Part of *Dark Shadows*' initial popularity was no doubt a result of the turbulent times. The same core issues which underscored so many *Star Trek* episodes also illuminated *Dark Shadows*: the sexual revolution, civil rights, and even the Vietnam War. Barnabas was popular, even beloved, because, like Mr. Spock, he was anti-authority, or more accurately, counter-authority. He was the mythical "other," the societal outcast who had rejected everything, even humanity, and gone in search of a higher truth, a higher morality. At the same time, he had human (and vampire) failings and issues. As Jonathan Frid commented at the height of *Dark Shadows* popularity:

Youngsters today are looking for a new morality. And so is Barnabas.... He hates what he is and he's in terrible agony. Just like the kids today, he's confused, lost, screwed up and searching for something.<sup>3</sup>

Because of its compelling and tragic central figure, *The Dark Shadows* phenomenon continued to burn brightly for some years. This "love story with a body count"<sup>4</sup> eventually spawned two feature films: *House of Dark Shadows* and *Night of Dark Shadows*, as well as a comic book series from Gold Key, record albums, board games, and more than thirty paperback novels. Twenty-five years after its debut, as the remake was being contemplated, MPI Home Video had sold more than 600,000 copies of *Dark Shadows* videotapes (five half-hour episodes per tape), triggering a major reissue of the soap's 1,225 installments. Additionally, *Dark Shadows* was among the first programs purchased by the then-new cable station, the Sci-Fi Channel, in the early '90s. Nine years later, it is *still* being aired daily in that venue (from 11:00 A.M. to noon.)

The notion to remake *Dark Shadows* first came about in 1987 when the networks and studios were running madly about in a panic due to an impending writers' strike. Networks required programming immediately, but the strike all but prevented the penning of new material. Thus various older TV properties (with old scripts) were being brought out of mothballs and considered as possible remakes, and some of these even made it to the air. The NBC late 1980s version of *Mission: Impossible* brought in new characters (save for Peter Graves' Jim Phelps) but relied entirely on "updated" teleplays from the 1960s original. *Dark Shadows* was bandied about as another prime candidate for revival, but the writer's strike ended and the (probably bad) idea of recycling old TV series was eventually dropped.

Then, in 1990, *Twin Peaks* made a huge splash as a soap opera with a difference. Weird, terrifying, and always offbeat, *Twin Peaks* proved again what *Dark Shadows* had established back in the sixties and seventies. Audiences liked soap opera stories with a touch of the macabre, a touch of the kinky. What better property, then, with which to take advantage of the suddenly in-vogue weird soap opera format than the genre's granddaddy? So, at the behest of NBC programming honcho Brandon Tartikoff, Dan Curtis exhumed *Dark Shadows*. Because twenty years had passed since the decline of the original series, Curtis commenced his revival with a controversial decision: he recast the entire show. Curtis felt, quite rightly, that the original cast members were too old to play the same parts and remain appealing to new, younger audiences. In press interviews at the time, Curtis suggested that he *would* bring back original cast members in different supporting parts as the new series continued, but such a crossover never materialized and one suspects that this idea was simply a bone thrown to fandom to keep it interested in a recast, reinvented version of a long-time favorite.

Despite the absence of beloved original performers such as Frid, the new *Dark Shadows* was

marvelously cast. British actor Ben Cross (*Chariots of Fire* [1981], *The Unholy* [1988]), became the regal but tortured Barnabas. Lysette Anthony (*Krull* [1983], *Husbands and Wives* [1992]) assumed the role of the vengeful spirit Angelique. Joanna Going (*How to Make an American Quilt* [1996]) became the beautiful governess, Victoria Winters. The remainder of the characters were ably portrayed by a gallery of veterans such as Roy Thinnes (*The Invaders* [1966-68]), Jean Simmons (*Spartacus*, *How to Make an American Quilt* [1996], *Star Trek: The Next Generation*: “The Drumhead”), Barbara Steele (*Black Sunday* [1960], *The Pit and the Pendulum* [1961]), Michael T. Weiss (*The Pretender* [1996-?]), and Joseph Gordon Levitt (*3rd Rock from the Sun*, *Halloween: H20* [1998]). As far as overall storyline and plot, Curtis opted for a revamp (pardon the pun) of Collins’ history rather than an all new adventure or mere continuation of what had come before:

We’re doing basically the same story.... The difference will be that we’ve had 25 years to look back on it and see the mistakes that we made.... We’re not going to mess with all of that fumbling around we did early on when we were trying to figure out what kind of show it should be.... We’ve found better stories. We’re a bit more mature than we were in those days.... This is *Dark Shadows* grown up.<sup>5</sup>

This was an important distinction for Curtis to establish because the original series had sometimes been suffused with a kind of desperate waffling. The storyline often went where commercialism dictated, and even became contradictory at points. The new series was to have the look and feel of grand planning rather than of scattershot (though admittedly brilliant) inspirations. Curtis explained:

The essential characters and relationships are the same, but the things they do are different. I thought I could rely on those old scripts but I found that they were full of crazy plots that we couldn’t use. So all the incidents are different: we arrive at similar points through a much different route. The plotting in the old show was totally ludicrous. This one is less ludicrous.<sup>6</sup>

In particular, the new *Dark Shadows* was to be more tightly focused than the original soap opera, with fewer characters and fewer complicated subplots to keep abreast of. The new series primarily revolved around three elements or plot points: Barnabas’s cure at the hands of Dr. Hoffman, Victoria’s arrival at Collinwood and growing relationship with Barnabas, and the beginning of Barnabas’s life as a vampire in the 1790s. This last bit of historical plotting was accomplished through Dan Curtis’s “parallel time” concept, a hold-over from the first show. This concept allowed for Victoria to travel backwards in time (via a haunted séance) to the year 1790, where she met the Collins family (portrayed by the same performers as in the present) and learned firsthand of the rather interesting family tree. Especially useful in this sequence of the series were the beautiful costumes the *Dark Shadows* production company had inherited from the 1988 film *Dangerous Liaisons*.

Early indications from the sets of Collinwood at Greystone Castle in Beverly Hills were quite positive. As series writer Sam Hall enthused:

Everything just came together so perfectly. I was in watching rushes one day and there’s one scene that I was in awe of from the first moment I saw it. Ben Cross, as Barnabas, is standing in the darkened woods and the fog is coming up behind him and it is really spellbinding. I was struck with the feeling that although this wasn’t *the* original, this was *Dark Shadows*. That same spirit was there. It’s got that same broodingly romantic sense of menace, that tension in the air.<sup>7</sup>

Production had begun on the new *Dark Shadows* in April of 1990, with Dan Curtis producing, and

NBC had okayed production on a half-season's (13 episodes) worth of shows. In the process of remaking a legend, the new *Dark Shadows* went boldly where the original couldn't: outdoors. The new show featured rich exteriors and location shots which the daytime soap was never able to afford. The personnel involved in this follow-up were also first rate. Rob Bowman (*The X-Files: Fight the Future* [1998]) and Paul Lynch, both frequent directors on *Star Trek: The Next Generation*, helmed episodes along with Armand Mastroianni (*Nightmare Cafe*). The guest stars included Michael Cavanaugh (*Starman* [1986-87]), Eddie Jones (*Lois and Clark: The New Adventures of Superman* [1993-97]), and a pre-*Highlander* [1992-98] Adrian Paul even did a multi-episode turn as Barnabas's lustful brother, Jeremiah Collins.

When the series started airing in January of 1991 on Friday nights, the first four episodes of the series were broadcast as two, two-hour telefilms. Although there had been a preview screening of the first few hours in Gramercy Theater in Manhattan and in Chicago and L.A.,<sup>8</sup> the new *Dark Shadows* experienced some conflicts when it finally aired for the masses. In particular, the Gulf War, or "Operation Desert Storm," had begun in Iraq while the foundation for the new *Dark Shadows* was carefully being laid out, week-after-week. As viewers of *Twin Peaks* had recognized, if you miss one week (particularly an *early* week) of such a drama, you are lost ... sometimes permanently. After heavy curiosity viewing trailed off, the new *Dark Shadows* was canceled by NBC and considered a major disappointment.

Despite its short network life, the new *Dark Shadows* has survived, if not actually flourished. It has been seen on the Sci-Fi Channel "Series Collection," and has also been released on videotape, just like its big brother. Today, thousands of *Dark Shadows* fans still get together at conventions but, ironically, the new, big-budget *Dark Shadows* is not the favored son at these gatherings. That old, gothic, daytime soap is still the king of the *Dark Shadows* world, low-budget, interior shooting, black and white photography, and all.

### CRITICAL COMMENTARY

Although this text commences with the year 1970, and the prime-time horror anthology series, *Rod Serling's Night Gallery*, a persuasive argument stating that the era of modern terror television *really* dawns with the 1966-71 TV daytime drama *Dark Shadows* might also be framed. After all, it is not just possible, but in fact highly probable that *Dark Shadows* pioneered mass acceptance of the horror genre by introducing a huge audience to the dining habits of Barnabas the vampire, Angelique the ghost, and Quentin the werewolf on a daily basis. This kind of massive exposure naturally led to a proliferation of the occult on TV and paved the way for *Night Gallery*, *The Sixth Sense*, *Kolchak: The Night Stalker*, and other night-time genre dramas. There is no doubt that *Dark Shadows* (the original) is an important element of modern TV terror because of its volume (more than 1,000 half-hour installments), popularity (two feature films were produced in the early '70s), and exposure level (it was on *every* weekday for five years!). The remake, however, does not rise to the same level of consequence.

Have no doubt, this is a solid genre program. The production values are top notch (though the exterior long shots of the Collinwood mansion are rather obviously miniature constructions and landscapes rather than real locations), the costumes are sumptuous, the acting is excellent, and the storyline is involving and even compelling. Rarely, if ever, has the gothic ethos been so well captured by television cameras. Fog-shrouded cemeteries, grand halls and passageways, fluttering ghosts in

flapping white gowns, and a sense of overwhelming tragedy dominate this *Dark Shadows* in an almost poetic manner. Barnabas is a classic gothic archetype: a villain (mostly in black) who nonetheless has an appealing, charismatic side to balance the evil in his soul. And Joanna Going makes for a beautiful (if perpetually confused) damsel-in-distress. Even the gothic notion of the doppelganger is revived successfully because Josette/Victoria look alike, and fulfill the same “heroine” role in various time periods.

Yet a spark of innovation is missing here. The storyline of the new *Dark Shadows* is very well told, especially once it finally gets to the 1790s and the origin of Barnabas, but this is, *alas*, the same story recounted in the original soap opera. It has been redesigned, tarted-up, and made more visually appealing, but in the final analysis it remains old news. The story of Barnabas is a great one, and one that is definitely worth retelling, but the fact that so many elements of his history are already known, and that the story unfolds in a somber manner at a near catatonic pace, results in uncomfortably long stretches of thematic void when the only thing to concentrate on is the pretty scenery, the good-looking people, and the oppressive mood. For some fans, that is undoubtedly enough.

Interestingly, this new *Dark Shadows* very much looks back to the past for inspiration. Bram Stoker’s *Dracula* is the unspoken prototype, with the new version of Willie Loomis coming off very much like the insane Renfield. Barnabas’s change of address (Carfax Abbey?), his enslavement of a beautiful, “morally loose” girl (Mina/Carolyn), and so on all harken back nicely to vampire history and the vampire stories of yesteryear. But, again, innovation is absent. This is why so many vampire movies of recent vintage appear as rigidly formulaic as the latter day James Bond pictures. An out-of-control sea vessel, a charismatic lead vampire, a woman enthralled, a long history of loneliness, a reincarnation of an old lover, the importance of crucifixes and other symbols ... these things are all overfamiliar. The only difference seems to be in assessing the actor who actually plays the vampire. Ben Cross is quite good in *Dark Shadows*, and it is fruitless to compare him to Jonathan Frid since the two performances came out of a vastly different set of limitations and requirements, but even Cross’s regal countenance and perfect diction are not enough to make this old material pulse as new.

One television show about vampires which succeeded thematically, though not in the ratings, is 1996’s *Kindred: The Embraced*. That series reinvented everything about vampires, from physiological weaknesses, to vampire law, to relationships with human beings. Although it cribbed freely from Shakespeare, gangster films, *Forever Knight*, Anne Rice, and yes, even *Dracula*, *Kindred* found new ways to blend its elements. It saw vampires not as lonely outsiders, but as warring clans living on the fringe of human society. *Dark Shadows* would have benefited from a similar re-think of traditional lore. Of course, that’s the inherent problem of remakes and sequels: the creators always feel obligated to genuflect to what has come before, and not change things too much, rather than to really stretch and adapt in new ways.

As old-fashioned horror, however, *Dark Shadows* is sensual and sensational. Ghosts, reincarnated spirits, voodoo curses, vampires, and the walking dead are resurrected with real flair and the images, supported by a tragic plot, have considerable impact. The story of Barnabas remains haunting even though the air of the familiar is hard to overcome. In that Barnabas is essentially a decent man who is a villain by circumstance, but a villain with goodness inside, *Dark Shadows* is a series (like *Forever Knight*) about redemption. In its push to tell that moving story, this series does gain some points. Also quite fun are the notions of parallel time and reincarnation, that the same souls encounter one another again and again, lifetime after lifetime. A short-lived series could do a lot worse than to play with

these interesting, if timeworn, ideas.

What is the real reason the new *Dark Shadows* failed? Although it is easy to point to bad timing (the nation was watching another soap opera: the Gulf War), less-than-artistic motivations (Hey! Let's cash in on *Twin Peaks!*), a depressing overall atmosphere, and even fan dissatisfaction with recasting, the truth is more uncomfortable and unusual than any of these options suggest. At the risk of angering many fans of the original *Dark Shadows* series, it seems safe to assert that the real charm of that original, landmark show was that it was so cheap, so blatantly phony. There was no time to do retakes, and the show was shot "as live" five days a week, every week, for five long years. Lines were flubbed, cues were missed, special effects were laughable, boom microphones dipped perilously into view, storylines were dragged out beyond any semblance of sanity, and still photographs substituted for real exteriors. Yet in spite of, or perhaps because of, these flaws, the show was charming, fun, and inventive. It had the feeling of daffy inspiration to it. It went along on its merry way, blissfully ignoring its own shortcomings, and became a legend. This writer submits that *Dark Shadows* became part of American pop history because viewers appreciated that a little, no-budget show was doing something different, and giving them its absolute all to be entertaining ... when so many big budgeted programs seemed brain dead and incapable of innovation. Bats on visible wires be damned, the original *Dark Shadows* was creative, witty, campy, and fun, with spontaneous on-the-fly genius in evidence day after harrowing day.

No matter what it did right or well, the 1991 remake could never recapture that energy, that feeling of low budget "zap" which infused the original with a zany, kinetic chemistry. Sometimes bigger budgets, better acting, and stronger production values do not a legend make. New generations of *Star Trek* spin-offs are learning the same valuable lesson today. People miss the styrofoam rocks and the heartfelt energy of the original Roddenberry classic. The new shows may be "good" in an objective, critical stance, but somehow the heart of *Star Trek* (and *Dark Shadows*) is changed when so many production limitations are lifted.

The new *Dark Shadows* is clearly good in every objective and sane way imaginable. Its gothic atmosphere, fine performances, special effects, and storylines are better than merely professional. Yet this author misses the bats on the visible wires, and the electric knowledge that for the next thirty minutes literally anything is possible because the writers are, quite simply, possessed of some form of insanity. That energy is so wonderful, so clear in the original *Dark Shadows*, and it is missing totally in the dour remake.

*Dark Shadows* episodes are not titled, but each is a chapter in a larger novel, a continuing story. The plot lines developed in the first thirteen episodes are left unresolved as of cancellation.

## CAST AND CREDITS

*Cast:* Ben Cross (Barnabas Collins); Lysette Anthony (Angelique); Joanna Going (Victoria Winters/Josette DuPres); Jim Fyfe (Willie/Ben Loomis); Joseph Gordon Levitt (David/Daniel Collins); Roy Thinnes (Roger/Reverend Trask); Jean Simmons (Elizabeth Collins Stoddard/Naomi Collins); Barbara Steele (Dr. Julia Hoffman/Countess Natalie DuPres); Michael T. Weiss (Joe/Peter Bradford); Barbara Blackburn (Carolyn Stoddard/Millicent); Ely Pouget (Maggie Evans); Veronica Lauren (Sarah Collins).

*Credits:* Series Created by: Dan Curtis. Certain Characters Developed by: Art Wallace. Supervising

*Producer: Steve Feke. Co-Producer: Jon Boorstin. Associate Producer: Bill Blunden. Executive Story Editors: Linda Campbell, M.M. Shelly Moore. Music: Bob Cobert. Casting: Mary Jo Slater. Director of Photography: Chuy Elizondo. Production Designer: Tony Cowley. Supervising Editor: Bill Blunden. Editor: Stephen Butler, Terry Williams. Unit Production Manager: S. Michael Formica. First Assistant Director: Dan Dugan. Second Assistant Director: John Syrjamaki. Executive Assistant to Mr. Curtis: Ruth E. Kennedy. Production Coordinator: Barbara Hall. Production Associate: DeAnne Heline. Set Decorator: Tim Kirkpatrick. Propmaster: Chris Eguia. Chief Lighting Technician: Nic Brown. Key Grip: Michael Coe. Sound Mixer: Pat Mitchell. Special Effects: Greg Curtis. Costume Designer: Rosalie Samplin Wallace. Wardrobe Supervisor: Donna Barrish. Women's Costumer: Deborah Squires. Men's Costumer: Rosalynda Wold. Makeup artist: Jack Petty. Hairstylist: Dee-Dee Petty. Script Supervisor: Steve Dorsch. Camera Operator: Ed Nelson. Stunt Coordinator: Walter Robles. Construction Coordinator: Rick Welden. Transport Coordinator: Gene Clinesmith. Location Manager: John Farrow. Assistant Editors: Anne Grodzicki Haschka, Mark E. Harris. Music Editor: Chris Ledesma. Supervising Sound Editor: Michael O'Corrigan. Rerecording Mixers: B. Tennyson Sebastian II, John Boyd, Edward F. Suski. Postproduction Supervisor: Bruce A. Pobjoy. Music Supervisor: Richard S. Kaufman. Main Title Design: Bill Mellar, Deena Burkett. Supervisor of Visual Effects: Bill Billar. Filmed on location in Beverly Hills, California. Executive in Charge of Production: Ron Von Schimmelfmann. From: Dan Curtis Television Productions, Inc., in association with MGM/UA.*

## EPISODE GUIDE

### • *Telefilms*

**A. Movie #1 (two hours)** Written by Hall Powell, William Taub, Steve Feke and Dan Curtis; Directed by Dan Curtis; airdate: January 13, 1991; *Guest Cast:* Rebecca Staab (Daphne Collins), Julianna McCarthy (Mrs. Johnson); Michael Cavanaugh (Sheriff George Patterson); Wayne Tippit, Hope North, Riff Hutton, Steve Fletcher, George Olden.

Beautiful Victoria Winters travels to Collinsport in New England to serve as tutor to young David Collins, son of the wealthy Roger Collins. Meanwhile, the scruffy-looking Willie Loomis goes in search of the legendary Collins' jewels, and comes upon a family tomb. Instead of finding riches in the tomb, he inadvertently releases Barnabas Collins, a 200-year-old vampire. Barnabas goes on a killing spree, turning young Daphne Collins into a vampire. Meanwhile, Barnabas claims to be a visiting relative from England, and sets up residence in the Collins manor house.

**B. Movie #2 (two hours)** Written by Hall Powell, William Taub, Steve Feke, Dan Curtis, Jon Boorstin; Directed by Dan Curtis; airdate: January 14, 1991; *Guest Cast:* Rebecca Staab (Daphne Collins), Julianna McCarthy (Mrs. Johnson); Michael Cavanaugh (Sheriff George Patterson); Wayne Tippit, Hope North, Riff Hutton, Steve Fletcher, George Olden.

Dr. Woodard and Dr. Julia Hoffman study Daphne Collins, the victim of Barnabas, and determine that a vampire is responsible for the killings near Collinwood Manor. Barnabas meets Victoria Winters for the first time and falls in love with her, believing her to be the reincarnation of his fiancée and true love, Josette DuPres. When Dr. Julia Hoffman learns the truth about Barnabas, she forms an alliance with him and tries to cure his vampirism. When Dr. Woodard interrupts the experiment and threatens to reveal Barnabas to the police, Barnabas pays the doctor a nocturnal visit.



**1. Episode #1** Written by Sam Hall, Steve Feke, Dan Curtis; Directed by Dan Curtis; airdate: January 18, 1991; *Guest Cast:* Michael Cavanaugh (Sheriff George Patterson); Julianna McCarthy (Mrs. Johnson); Steve Fletcher.

Dr. Woodard is killed by the police after his first transformation into a vampire, and all evidence fingering Barnabas as the murderer is destroyed. At Collinwood, Victoria meets a ghost named Sarah, a young girl who presents Miss Winters with a journal that details the various tragedies of the Collins family down through the ages. While Barnabas continues to show progress with Dr. Hoffman's treatment, and can even walk around in the daylight, he is unhappy to learn of Victoria's recently "found" journal. To him it is a dark reminder of the past, and of the treacherous woman who caused all of his pain ... a woman called Angelique.

**2. Episode #2** Written by Matthew Hall, Steve Feke and Dan Curtis; Directed by Armand Mastroianni; airdate: January 25, 1991; *Guest Cast:* Eddie Jones (Sam Evans); Julianna McCarthy (Ms. Johnson).

Barnabas invites Victoria to Collinwood for a romantic dinner and presents her with a beautiful gift: Josette's music box. Dr. Hoffman grows increasingly jealous of Barnabas's new intimacy with Victoria and responds by stopping his treatment to become mortal. Willie reveals to Hoffman that Barnabas believes Victoria is the reincarnation of his love from the 1700s, Josette, and he intends to marry her. Before long, the vampiric urge returns to Barnabas and he ages rapidly until his only recourse to reclaim his youth is to drink the blood of young Carolyn Stoddard.

**3. Episode #3** Written by Jon Boorstin, Steve Feke and Dan Curtis; Directed by Armand Mastroianni; airdate: February 1, 1991; *Guest Cast:* Lysette Anthony (Angelique); Michael Cavanaugh (Sheriff George Patterson); Charles Lane, Julianna McCarthy (Mrs. Johnson); Ellen Wheeler (Phyllis Wicke).

Before attending a magnificent costume ball at Collinwood, Willie worries that Barnabas, a blood-thirsty vampire once more, will harm Ms. Winters. At the costume party, Barnabas and Dr. Hoffman exchange angry words, and Victoria shows up looking like a dead-ringer for Josette DuPres. At a tense gathering after the ball, Barnabas is nearly outed as the killer of Collinsport by an uncannily accurate Ouija board. Carolyn, working as Barnabas's slave, attempts to poison Dr. Hoffman in payment for her failures to make him mortal, but David intercedes at the ghost Sarah's behest. Angelique, an evil ghost from the past, makes an appearance, and young Victoria Winters is miraculously transported to the 1790s during a séance which also deposits a frightened and sick woman from the past, Phyllis Wickes, into the present.

**4. Episode #4** Written by Jon Boorstin; Directed by Paul Lynch; airdate: February 8, 1991; *Guest Cast:* Michael Cavanaugh (Sheriff George Patterson/Andre DuPres); Stefan Gierasch (Joshua Collins); Juliana McCarthy (Ms. Johnson/Aunt Abigail); Lysette Anthony (Angelique); Courtenay McWhinney (Crone); Laurel Wiley (Girl).

Victoria finds herself at the Collinwood estate in the year 1790, masquerading as the tutor to the Collins children. The Barnabas of that era, not yet a vampire, does not take long to notice Victoria's resemblance to his beloved fiancée, Josette. Victoria takes her place in the household, and meets Josette's servant Angelique ... who also happens to be in love with Barnabas. Aunt Abigail seeks to out Victoria as a witch, and goes to the evil Reverend Trask for his assistance in doing so.

**5. Episode #5:** Written by M.M. Shelly Moore, Linda Campanelli, and William Gray; Directed by Paul Lynch; airdate: February 15, 1991; *Guest Cast:* Michael Cavanaugh (Sheriff George Patterson/Andre DuPres); Steve Fletcher, Stefan Gierasch (Joshua Collins); Julianna McCarthy (Ms. Johnson/Aunt Abigail); Adrian Paul (Jeremiah Collins); Ellen Wheeler (Phyllis Wicke).

Still trapped in 1790, Victoria watches as Josette arrives at the Collins home from France and is bewitched by the evil servant Angelique, who practices voodoo. Angelique's latest spell makes Josette turn her attentions to Jeremiah, Barnabas's brother. Victoria spies Josette and Jeremiah together in the stable and informs Josette's mother, but the nosy Abigail has also overheard the revelation. Barnabas, having learned of Jeremiah's and Josette's secret marriage, challenges Jeremiah to a tragic duel.

**6. Episode #6** Written by Matthew Hall; Directed by Rob Bowman; airdate: March 1, 1991; *Guest Cast:* Michael Cavanaugh (Sheriff George Patterson/Andre DuPres); Apollo Dukakis (Reverend); Stefan Gierasch (Joshua Collins); Eddie Jones (Bailiff); Julianna McCarthy (Ms. Johnson/Aunt Abigail); Adrian Paul (Jeremiah); Ellen Wheeler (Phyllis Wicke).

At Jeremiah's funeral, Victoria is fingered as a witch by Abigail and remanded into the custody of Reverend Trask. Angelique is rejected by Barnabas again, but this time Angelique promises him he will be sorry and proceeds to reanimate the dead Jeremiah. A walking zombie, Jeremiah returns to life, abducts Josette, and nearly throws her from a high precipice. Even with all this tragedy, Angelique's manipulations are far from over: after Barnabas kills her, he is attacked by a vicious vampire bat and transformed forever into a creature of the night. In the present, a séance goes wrong and Julia is possessed by Angelique.

**7. Episode #7** Written by M.M. Shelly Moore and Linda Campanelli; Directed by Rob Bowman; airdate: March 8, 1991; *Guest Cast:* Michael Cavanaugh (Sheriff George Patterson/Andre DuPres), Stefan Gierasch (Joshua Collins); Julianna McCarthy (Ms. Johnson/Aunt Abigail); Shawn Modrell (Ruby); Richard Burns (Customer); Apollo Dukakis (Reverend); Robert S. Telford, Ellen Wheeler (Phyllis Wicke).

After his so-called death, the 1790s Barnabas awakens to discover that he is a vampire with a thirst for blood. This is Angelique's revenge upon him, a revenge that cannot be changed unless Barnabas gives himself freely to her. Meanwhile, Victoria warns Josette to leave Collinsport lest she meet a grisly fate at Widow's Hill in just a few days. Josette vows to leave, but on her last night in town, she encounters her former-love Barnabas, now one of the undead.

**8. Episode #8** Written by William Gray; Directed by Mark Sobel; airdate: March 15, 1991; *Guest Cast:* Michael Cavanaugh (Sheriff George Patterson/Andre DuPres), Stefan Gierasch (Joshua Collins); Julianna McCarthy (Ms. Johnson/Aunt Abigail); Eddie Jones (Bailiff); Brendan Dillon (Judge); Dick Valentine (Jury); Ellen Wheeler (Phyllis Wicke).

In the present, Barnabas recruits Maggie to purge Angelique's spirit from Dr. Hoffman's body. In the past, Peter Bradford attempts to defend Victoria from charges of witchcraft now that her trial has begun. The still-living Josette, in love with Barnabas even though he is a vampire, is taunted by the ghost of Angelique and she throws herself off of Widow's Hill to her death. At the trial of Victoria, Angelique maintains that she is not a witch.

**9. Episode #9** Written by M.M. Shelly Moore, Linda Campanelli, and Matthew Hall; Directed by

Mark Sobel, airdate: March 22, 1991; *Guest Cast*: Michael Cavanaugh (Sheriff George Patterson/Andre DuPres), Stefan Gierasch (Joshua Collins); Julianna McCarthy (Ms. Johnson/Aunt Abigail); Eddie Jones (Bailiff); Brendan Dillon (Judge); Ellen Wheeler (Phyllis Wicke).

Everything at last comes full circle: Victoria seeks to escape from the past and accusations of witchcraft as the hangman awaits her, a tortured Barnabas asks to be locked up in his tomb forever, so as not to kill again, and young, innocent Sarah dies of diphtheria, becoming the ghost who will one day warn Victoria about Collinwood's long, dark history. As Angelique manipulates officials to assure Victoria's demise in the past, Phyllis Wicke dies in the present, causing another unexpected temporal switch. Even with all this evil going on, Angelique is not finished either. In the present, she switches bodies once more.

## ***Beyond Reality (1991–1993)***

### **FORMAT**

Beautiful Laura Wingate (Shari Belafonte) is a professor of parapsychology at a prominent northern university. Sharing office space with her in the department is associate professor J.J. Stillman (Carl Marotte). Both of these educators are fascinated by the supernatural/paranormal, and have conducted various legitimate studies about ESP, reincarnation, astral projection, and the like.

In the first two seasons of the made-for-cable TV series *Beyond Reality*, these two intrepid researchers investigate claims of “real” psychic activity (stories supposedly based on fact) and help people who are suffering because they do not understand their unusual ESP abilities. In the third season, office assistant Celia Powell (Nikki de Boer of *Deep Space Nine*) joins Laura and J.J. in their investigations, and all pretenses of “fact-based” cases are dispensed with. Instead, the third season goes for broke as Laura, J.J., and Celia travel through time (“Reunion”), encounter vampires (“The Passion”), clash with shape-shifters (“Where There’s Smoke”), succumb to love potions (“The Loving Cup”), meet aliens (“Final Flight”), fight demons (“The Box”), battle sorcerers (“Bloodstone”) and even enter the horrifying world of a 1950s sitcom (“Let’s Play House”)!

A latter-day *The Sixth Sense* mixed with a touch of *One Step Beyond* and *The Next Step Beyond*, *Beyond Reality* is a Canadian-produced series from the same people who toiled on the USA versions of *Alfred Hitchcock Presents*, *The Hitchhiker*, and later *Forever Knight*. Like *The Sixth Sense*, the general setting is a department of parapsychology at a major university, and like *One Step Beyond*, the claim is made that the events portrayed on the series are based on “true stories” of the paranormal. Here, however, no documentation is ever produced which might lend credence to the claim of “truth.” Unlike Gary Collins’ Dr. Michael Rhodes in *The Sixth Sense*, however, Dr. Wingate has two partners. And, also unlike *One Step Beyond* or its sequel, *Beyond Reality* is a serial rather than anthology.

Each episode of *Beyond Reality* launches with several tracking shots of skyscrapers at night. These well-lit buildings are seen from a low angle, which makes them seem ominous and foreboding. A black crow then flies before the camera, and a gothic structure is the next image seen. The sky behind this unusual building goes gray suddenly, filled with clouds. Then the camera switches to an open book which features a drawing of that very structure. The cast is introduced, and various images float by: a book on fire, a fence at night, two open palms with eyes glaring out into the night, and then the title *Beyond Reality* is animated over a single planet hovering in space in the center of the frame. Finally, a naked baby is seen rotating in a black void, a kind of “star child” like the one seen in *2001: A Space Odyssey*. The inference of these opening credits is that the frightening images (of flames, weird buildings, hands with eyes) are superseded by the serenity of space and even human evolution (as shown by the baby). In some senses this opening sequence reflects well the show’s content, because each *Beyond Reality* episode charts the path from fear to acceptance as characters are first terrified of their psychic abilities, but then come to understand them as part of the human experience.

### **HISTORY**

After the demise of *Dracula: The Series*, and *Friday the 13th: The Series*, many of Canada’s finest

television artists turned their full attention to a new genre series, the paranormal-based *Beyond Reality*. This promising fresh initiative was created by Hans Beimler and Richard Manning, two versatile writers who had guided the new starship *Enterprise* through many of its best early voyages on *Star Trek: The Next Generation* (1987–1994), including “The Arsenal of Freedom” and “Symbiosis” in 1988, “The Emissary” and “Shades of Gray” in 1989, and “Who Watches the Watchers,” “Yesterday’s Enterprise” (with Ira Steven Behr and Ronald D. Moore) and “Allegiance” in 1990. Because of their *Star Trek* connection, Manning and Beimler were able to recruit for *Beyond Reality* fine writing talent from that popular sci-fi series, including Melinda Snodgrass (“The Measure of a Man”), Ira Steven Behr (*Deep Space Nine*: “The Nagus,” “The Homecoming,” “Rules of Acquisition,” “The Jem’Hadar,” “Prophet Motive”) and *Star Trek* novelists Judith and Garfield Reeves-Stevens. Also on hand for this new half-hour series was writer Marc Scott Zicree, frequent contributor to *Friday the 13th: The Series* (“Doctor Jack,” “Scarecrow,” “Pipe Dream”), *Space Precinct* (“Enforcer,” “Body and Soul,” “Illegal”) and author of *The Twilight Zone Companion*. From *Dracula: The Series* came writers Phil Bedard and Larry Lalonde, who later produced *Forever Knight*.

Behind the scenes, *Beyond Reality* really looked a great deal like a mating of *Dracula: The Series* and *Friday the 13th: The Series*. From the former came director of photography Maris Jansons. From the latter came musician Fred Mollins and art director Stephen Roloff. From both series came visual effects director John Gajdecki. Directors from *Dracula* and *Friday the 13th* were also tapped for extensive duty on *Beyond Reality*, including Allan Kroeker (*Dracula: The Series*: “I Love Lucard,” “Klaus Encounters of the Interred Kind,” *Friday the 13th: The Series*: “Epitaph for a Lonely Soul,” “The Long Road Home,” “The Spirit of Television”), Rene Bonniere (*Dracula: The Series*: “Damsel in Distress,” “A Little Nightmare Music,” “Bats in the Attic,” “My Dinner with Lucard”), Randy Bradshaw (*Dracula: The Series*: “Double Darkness,” “Bad Blood”), and William Fruet (*Friday the 13th: The Series*: “The Inheritance,” “Scarecrow,” “Vanity’s Mirror,” “Doorway to Hell,” “Wax Magic,” “Face of Evil,” “The Shaman’s Apprentice,” “Bad Penny,” “Repetition,” and “The Tree of Life”).

In the acting category, Shari Belafonte (*The Being* [1981], *Hotel*), carried the burden of the show, starring as Dr. Laura Wingate. She was assisted by Carl Marotte, an unknown to most American audiences, and Nikki de Boer, a woman who would go on to science fiction fame by appearing on both the Sci-Fi Channel’s original series *Mission: Genesis* and on *Deep Space Nine* as Ezri Dax. Guest stars on *Beyond Reality* were also an interesting reflection of *Dracula: The Series* and *Friday the 13th* talent, with Lynne Cormack (Eileen Townsend of *Dracula: The Series*), Kate Trotter (*Friday the 13th*: “The Quilt of Hathor,” “And Now the News,” *Dracula: The Series*: “I Love Lucard”), Geordie Johnson (*Dracula* himself), and Elias Zarou (*Friday the 13th*: “The Doorway to Hell”) showing up for psychic action. Other genre notables on *Beyond Reality* included Chris Makepeace of *Vamp* (1985) in “Miracle Worker,” Nicholas Campbell of *The Hitchhiker* and *Space: 1999*: “Matter of Balance” and “Range of Motion,” Gwynyth Walsh of *Star Trek: Generations* (1994) in “Black Magic” and John Colicos—Baltar of *Battlestar Galactica* (1978)—in the final episode of the series, “Bloodstone.”

*Beyond Reality* aired on the USA Network in the United States before being canceled after 44 half-hour shows. The series started off slow, but soon became fairly involving, perhaps because of the high-quality of the writing, and the good performances from de Boer, Belafonte, and Marotte. A legitimate evolution of the ideas first explored in *One Step Beyond* and *The Sixth Sense*, *Beyond Reality* also looked forward to *The X-Files*, as it was among the first “partners”-format programs to take the idea of the paranormal seriously.

Today *Beyond Reality* is almost continually rerun on the Sci-Fi Channel's daytime schedule. Heir is *Psi Factor: Chronicles of the Paranormal*, another paranormal series which attempts to suggest that its cases are real, right down to the presence of host Dan Aykroyd, and shows that are so-called dramatizations of real events.

## CRITICAL COMMENTARY

Despite its low budget origins and look, *Beyond Reality* is a surprisingly good horror series, with more on its mind than merely provoking fear in its audience. On a simple level, the series displays a mastery of horror history and imagery that is quite unusual, and shows rather dramatically that the people responsible for the somewhat slow-paced and lugubrious *Friday the 13th: The Series* and the zany but inconsistent *Dracula: The Series* had learned to master the half-hour format, and the genre they had come to toil in.

For instance, in "The Color of Mad," an artist (*Dracula: The Series*' Geordie Johnson) becomes obsessed with a former mental patient's vision of evil. She lives in a world with a monster called Pitt, a Lovecraftian abomination that soon comes alive on the artist's canvas, and wants to turn people into "things." Seen as a painting, Pitt is a cyclopean thing with a gaping maw. Before long, the creature's painted eye comes to horrible life, drawing people into the "other" world of the beast. Special visual effects, distortion lenses, and a memory of Lovecraft's "Old Ones" inform this particular story. It is also a tip of the hat to the "future" of the horror genre, because Johnson's painter is named "Barker," after Clive Barker.

"Dead Air" is equally informed about the genre, and references horror lore with a delightful premise. In particular, this story remembers the era of radio horror (and shows such as *The Inner Sanctum* and *The Shadow*). It tells the story of a mythical killer with a plate in his head, who is called "The Crusher." This creature *cum* superhero comes to life and must be dealt with by Wingate and Celia, but the story is really and truly about imagination, and how a voice on a radio can spur imagination to a point that listeners actually come to believe that what they are hearing is real. "Dead Air" is a charming horror story an ode to a bygone era, and a remembrance of the past when the genre was part of an oral, rather than a visual, tradition.

Stories on *Beyond Reality* like "The Box" are also out-and-out horror. It unapologetically trades on decapitations, a high body count, and blood galore. The story involves a deadly face-off against a demon, and underlying this story is a meditation on reason versus magic, science versus fear, and so on. In this, and in many of its stories, *Beyond Reality* mastered the half-hour format by relating interesting stories with interesting people. The writers got into the trenches, told their stories effectively, and got out of the half-hour with a maximum of fun and intelligence.

But horror imagery is merely a piece of *Beyond Reality*'s well-wrought tapestry. Thematically, the series proffers an interesting conceit, and then sticks with it throughout its run. Wingate and Stillman are parapsychologists, but psychologists just the same, so many of their cases involve the mindsets of various disturbed individuals. How *Beyond Reality* decided to deal with these disorders is an innovative choice. Instead of merely showing the audience how these unstable men and women were suffering through the arts of acting or expository dialogue, the producers brought us into the internal terror of the sick-minded. The mental problems of the guest stars are thus externalized as real, *physical* worlds, so that J.J., Laura, and Celia often actually "enter" dream planes (a concept seen later in *Sleepwalkers* [1997]), past lives, and the memories of those being tormented by paranormal

problems. In “Asylum,” for instance, a black man of today’s world is imprisoned within his own mind by the spirit of a desperate runaway slave from the Civil War era. This battle inside the man’s head is dramatized literally. The viewer sees the modern man actually locked in a crumbling old mansion (representing his mind), while the slave, in control, runs free through a field. Similarly, in “Mirror, Mirror,” a plain Jane becomes a captive of her own negative self-image. In her mind, she is beautiful, but in reality she is awkward and lumpy. That dream world, that place where she is graceful and free, is played out as a “real” place on the other side of her mirror, her looking glass. “Master of Darkness” also externalizes the inner mind of a disturbed individual. In this case, a parallel reality called “Darkworld” is created by a combination of hallucinogenic drugs and personal will. Some may find this approach hokey, but *Beyond Reality* uses the idea of inner psychoses as physical planes with admirable consistency and logic.

Two of the most interesting *Beyond Reality* episodes explore how people can retreat deep into their inner minds, and get forever locked in. In “Facing the Wall,” a shy, lonely man finds himself increasingly turning inward. This slip into a dark abyss is also dramatized as a physical world, a black and white totalitarian society where everybody is masked. J.J. enters the “other” world of the man’s mind and discovers that each masked person in this fascist state represents a part or compartment of his patient’s psyche. Only when those masks come off can the man face reality again.

“Let’s Play House” is even more interesting. A man who cannot handle the complexity of male-female relationships in the 1990s manages to pull Celia, J.J., and Laura into a 1950s “sitcom” world of apparent perfection. There is no sadness in the world of *Father Knows Best*, no problems which cannot be solved in a half hour, and the Caucasian family man (husband and father) is the ultimate authority. Celia is cast (against her will) as the doting, supportive wife, Laura is cast (*really* against her will) as the upbeat and savvy “negro” housekeeper, and J.J. fills in the role of helpful next-door neighbor. In order to escape this plastic, false world of *Father Knows Best*, the *Beyond Reality* troika decide to impose a little reality on the “perfect” image of the 1950s. McCarthyism, red scares, fallout shelters, motorcycle bikers, a pregnant daughter, the birth of the Civil Rights movement, and other historical events and movements (dramatized by Laura, J.J., and Celia in humorous fashion) remind the dream-maker that no epoch is perfect or carefree, and that if he can face life in a tough dream, he can also face it in reality. “Let’s Play House” is a thoroughly impressive story not only because it puts *Beyond Reality*’s heroes in a deadly situation (a nightmare world) and gives the actors different roles to play, but because it succeeds in reminding audiences that nostalgia for a previous generation or decade is not necessarily a true representation of how things really were. And, delightfully, this episode of *Beyond Reality* arrived a full seven years before the big-budget *Pleasantville* [1998] attempted to navigate the same territory.

Like John Newland’s *The Next Step Beyond* (1978), *Beyond Reality* also harbors a strong opinion about how people should view psychic phenomena and paranormal powers. Like the twin Newland series, *Beyond Reality* believes that psychic powers are not only helpful to people, but that they could actually be therapeutic, and heal the inner pain of many tortured souls. This none-too-subtle agenda is played out in a variety of stories which begin with horrific premises, but then become “feel good” shows about humanity’s ability to accept and heal itself. In “Miracle Worker,” a young empath uses his “psychic” healing powers to repair the breach between himself and his estranged father. “Reunion” involves unresolved issues between J.J. and his own deceased father, and J.J. also gets to repair the breach when he travels back in time and is allowed to relive his father’s wartime experiences aboard a doomed submarine. In “Intimate Shadows,” a ghost/apparition leads to a tender reunion between an

estranged husband and wife. In “Nightmare Without End” a psychic rape teaches a scared young woman not to be victimized in reality or in her dreams. In “Justice,” a prisoner astral projects himself from his body when tortured by a brutal prison guard, and thus escapes the pain of his everyday existence. In “Echoes of Evil,” a reincarnated Nazi is punished when regression therapy gives him a glimpse of true evil, and so forth. Each of these stories has a strong didactic purpose: to teach people to view paranormal powers as a gift, not a curse. The horror in *Beyond Reality* occurs because people are unfamiliar with their own minds, and thus their own potential. That horror resolves into peace, understanding, and acceptance when J.J. and Laura manage to solve the puzzle, and help their patients see why these strange things are occurring to them.

No series could be a success if the characters and stories were not consistently interesting. Although *Beyond Reality* starts slow, *really* slow, and many early stories are deadly dull, the writers, directors and actors soon turned that trend around successfully. By the third season, it seemed that *Beyond Reality* had gone on a bender, literally going for broke with the most unusual, bizarre, and interesting stories imaginable (like the aforementioned “Let’s Play House”). So, as the series wore on, both the stories and the people became progressively more interesting to watch. In “Bloodstone,” Laura confronts her fear of drowning. In the beautiful “Nightfall,” J.J. learns about mortality from a woman on her deathbed. In “The Passion,” a vampire story, J.J. discovers his family’s past and learns that in previous lives he knew incarnations of Celia and Laura.

In “The Loving Cup,” a silly show, the characters really come to life and become fun. A special “cursed” cup forces the series’ protagonists to fall in love with another. It is absurd, tongue-in-cheek action to be sure, but fun nevertheless to see these usually stolid characters acting lovesick for one another. In one particularly delightful character moment, the womanizing J.J. falls in love not with one of his beautiful work mates, but with his own reflection!

Another innovative third season show is “Inner Ear,” in which Celia ingests a “telepathy” drug which allows her to hear the thoughts of others. This episode pulls no punches, and has a ring of truth to it, as Celia’s boyfriend thinks she is acting weird because of “PMS.” Worse, Laura mentally castigates a less-than-intelligent student, and J.J. displays some real irritation with Celia’s flaky nature. “Inner Ear” dramatizes the different sides of *Beyond Reality*’s dramatis personae in a fun way, and nicely suggests that sometimes it is better *not* to know what even the best of friends are thinking about you.

Perhaps the best and most surprising episode of *Beyond Reality* is “The Dying of the Light,” in which a friend and mentor J.J. has known and loved for years is suddenly possessed by a demon. J.J. tries to help, but what he finds is startling. It is the man he knows and loves who is the demon, a scholarly creature who took possession of a young man’s body and soul some twenty-five years ago. That young man was a thug, and the demon “possessor” is a thoughtful intellectual man with much to contribute to the world. When J.J. discovers that one creature has appropriated the body of another, he must decide who is to survive. The premise and the solution are clever, and the story reaches its startling (but logical) conclusion when J.J. makes the only choice he can.

Special effects on *Beyond Reality* are low-key, and low-budget, and it is quite true that many first season and second season episodes are lackluster. However, *Beyond Reality*’s excellent third year makes up for many early deficiencies. Perhaps the producers realized the show would be canceled and went for broke, or perhaps they just decided it was time to liven things up. For whatever the reason, *Beyond Reality* in its three years on the air grew into a fun, enjoyable series that had some striking horror visuals, an interesting conceit (the externalization of the inner mind), and an agenda (that



psychic powers are therapeutic). Not many modern horror series, especially those which air on the USA Network, can claim to strike so many chords successfully. *Beyond Reality* is a decent terror TV series, and an interesting bridge between the era of *One Step Beyond* and *The Sixth Sense* and the heyday of *The X-Files* and *Millennium*.

## CAST AND CREDITS

*Cast:* Shari Belafonte (Dr. Laura Wingate); Carl Marotte (J.J. Stillman); **Second and Third Seasons:** Nikki de Boer (Celia Powell).

*Credits: Supervising Executives:* Hans Beimler, Richard Manning. *Producer:* Richard Borchiver. *Line Producer:* Lena Cordina. *Created by:* Richard Manning and Hans Beimler. *Executive Producer:* Ron Ziskin, John Slan, Shukri Ghalayini. *Executive Script Consultant:* James Kahn. *Story Editor (second season):* Marc Scott Zicree.

*Production Manager:* Noella Nездoly. *Director of Photography:* Maris Jansons. *Art Director:* Stephen W. Roloff. *Editor:* Dave Goard. *Music Composed and Performed by:* Fred Mollin. *First Assistant Director:* Felix Gray. *Costume Designer:* Mary Partridge. *Miss Belafonte's Wardrobe :* Tu Ly. *Casting:* Diedre Bowen Casting. *Stunts:* Paul Rutledge, Susan Parker. *Stunt Coordinator:* Dwayne McLean for STUNTCO. *Camera Operator:* Gordon Langevin. *Sound Recordist:* Bill McMillan. *Script Supervisor:* Donna Gardon. *Location Manager:* Erik T. Snyder. *First Assistant Director:* Adam Kolodziej. *Production Accountant:* Andrea Wassell. *Decorator:* Jacques Bradett. *Key Props:* Tom Wilkinson. *Makeup:* Cheree Van Dyk. *Hair:* Deanna Cummings. *Key Grip:* Richard Emerson. *Gaffer:* Andris Matiss. *Second Assistant Director:* Bruce Speyer. *Production Coordinator:* Eric Beldowski. *Transportation Coordinator:* Trevor Smith. *Executive Assistant:* Angela McGardner. *World Wide Marketing:* Margo Raport. *Special Effects:* Ted Ross. *Visual Effects:* John Gajdecki. *First Assistant Editor:* Stewart Dowds. *Special Effects Editor:* Paul Kirsch. *On-line assistant:* Will Hearn. *Colorist:* Chris Wallace. *Video Postproduction Facilities Provided by:* Dome Productions. *Rerecordist:* Perry Cardic. *Dialogue Editor:* Steve Foster. *Dialogue Conform:* Rob Hegedus. *Foley Artist:* John Sievert. *Audio Postproduction Facilities Provided by:* Sound Interchange. *Title Sequence:* Stephen W. Roloff. *Title and Optical Effects:* John Gajdecki. With assistance from the Ontario Film Investment Program. Produced in cooperation with the USA Network. From Paragon Entertainment Corporation.

## EPISODE GUIDE

### • *First Season (1991–1992)*

**1. “Mirror, Mirror”** Written by Robin Jill Bernheim; Directed by Allan Kroeker; airdate: October 4, 1991; *Guest Cast:* Nikki de Boer (Anna Mason); Lynne Cormack (Jane Mason); Norma Edwards (S. Hardy); Peter Dvorsky (Dr. Dixon).

A plain Jane in J.J.'s “Introduction to Parapsychology” class fantasizes a relationship with him and visualizes herself as a beautiful woman in her mirror image. J.J. is reported for “misconduct” because of her imaginings, but there is a larger dilemma: Anna Mason is trapped in an alternate existence inside her mirror when her angry mother shatters it in a fit of rage.

**2. “The Doppelganger”** Written by James Kahn; Directed by Mario Azzopardi; airdate: October 11, 1991; *Guest Cast:* Kenneth Walsh (Joe Revere); Len Doncheff (Bartender).

A man has frightening and vivid dreams of being attacked by vicious freaks in a dark alley and consequently goes to J.J. and Laura for assistance. Laura induces a dream which leads her patient to a small apartment and the bizarre discovery of a double.

**3. "Miracle Worker"** Written by Melinda Bell; Directed by Graeme Campbell; airdate: October 18, 1991; *Guest Cast:* Chris Makepeace (Anthony Bowen); Cedric Smith (Bill Bowen); Nick Rice (the Surgeon); George Seremba (Keets); Andrew Cuff (Sam).

A young man working in the Peace Corps in Kenya gains the incredible ability to heal the sick and injured, but after doing so he absorbs the pain and wounds of those whose suffering he has taken away. The healer returns home in time to discover that his father, an administrator on campus who has just cut J.J.'s and Laura's budget, is in the hospital facing terminal cancer.

**4. "Return Visit"** Written by Ira Steven Behr; Directed by Allan Kroeker; airdate: October 25, 1991; *Guest Cast:* Cyndy Preston (Jenny Lambert); Jill Frappier (Barbara Lambert); James B. Douglas (Gil Lambert); Dick Callahan (Security Guard).

J.J. visits a woman in the hospital who was hit by lightning in Afghanistan and has experienced a vision of her missing, presumed-dead mother. J.J. and Laura learn that there has recently been a threefold increase in UFO sightings and begin to suspect that alien abduction is somehow involved in Jenny's compulsion to return home and find her mother.

**5. "Intimate Shadows"** Written by Alan Fine; Directed by Jorge Montesi; airdate: November 1, 1991; *Guest Cast:* Scott Hylands (Frederick); Kate Trotter (Miriam); Steve Whistance-Smith (The Bum).

A timid, heartbroken woman living alone experiences a ghost sighting in the library and hears the spirit calling her name. She talks to J.J. and Laura, who warn her that 90 percent of ghost sightings are delusions or dreams, but it isn't long before the ghost reasserts himself and is revealed to be the spirit of her husband who left her long ago ... but who is still alive and living on the streets as a bum.

**6. "Echoes of Evil"** Written by Gordon Farr; Directed by Rene Bonniere; airdate: November 8, 1991; *Guest Cast:* Milan Cheylov (Dave Jefferson); Ann-Marie Macdonald (Rebecca Friedkin); Doris Petrie (Ester Perrovitz); Richard Sali (Otto Leider); Susan Kottmann (Leider's Mother).

An orderly in a nursing home believes that he is the reincarnation of a Nazi S.S. officer, Otto Leider. After tormenting and murdering a helpless old concentration camp survivor, he seeks out J.J. and Laura for help with a past-life regression ... but is unprepared to look into the real face of evil.

**7. "Range of Motion"** Written by Marc Scott Zicree; Directed by Eleanore Lindo; airdate: November 15, 1991; *Guest Cast:* Nicholas Campbell (Tom Becker); Susan Hogan (Maggie Becker); Deborah Duchene (Kathy); Domenic Cuzzocrea (Pomposello).

A paraplegic is suddenly able to move his arm, and his wife wonders if he is doing it through telepathy, ESP, or some other psychic method. Laura and J.J. set up an experiment to determine the truth, but are disturbed when they realize the movement may be a result of a spectral haunting, and a secret relationship from the past.

**8. "The Cold"** Written by Ralph Phillips; Directed by Allan Eastman; airdate: November 22, 1991;

*Guest Cast:* Janet Laine Greene (Sharon); Laura Press (Natalie Hopkins); Martin Doyle (Malcolm); Robert More (Paul).

A mall merchant experiences a strange vision in which she is plunged into a frozen world of ice. She goes to see J.J. and Laura because she is always cold, and it is soon revealed that her ex-lover is hovering near death at “Future Life,” a cryogenic repository.

**9. “The Bridge”** Written by Richard Manning and Hans Beimler; Directed by Gilbert Shilton; airdate: November 29, 1991; *Guest Cast:* Nathaniel Moreau (Michael Dorset); David Ferry (Frank Dorset); Christine Reeves (Susan Dorset); Seirge LeBlanc (Gary); Scott Wickwire (Cop); Sandy Quan (Nurse).

J.J. and Laura prevent a 12-year-old boy from jumping off a bridge to his death. After rescuing him, the boy runs away and the parapsychologist fears that the spirit of his father, who died in an accident on that bridge, may be convincing the boy to join him in the afterlife.

**10. “Black Magic”** Written by James Kahn; Directed by Jorge Montesi; airdate: December 6, 1991; *Guest Cast:* Gwynyth Walsh (Domenique); Lindsay Merrithew (Eric); Krista Bridges (Angie); Anthony Sherwood (Elliot).

A high-powered attorney who has closed off his feelings discovers that his lover may be involved with voodoo and strange occult rituals. A psychiatrist recommends that he see J.J. and Laura before his belief in a voodoo hex drives him over the edge.

**11. “Enemy in Our Midst”** Written by Melinda S. Snodgrass; Directed by Allan Kroeker; airdate: December 14, 1991; *Guest Cast:* Jennifer Dale (Diana); Matthew Mackay (Cody); Andrew Gillies (John).

A teenage boy on a horse ranch begins to have visions that his mother is in danger from drowning, fire, and the like. Laura and J.J. investigate and come to fear that Cody, whose mother has recently remarried after her first husband’s death, is somehow projecting his own anger at his mother and her lover through psychokinesis.

**12. “Asylum”** Written by Marc Scott Zicree; Directed by Bruce Pittman; airdate: December 20, 1991; *Guest Cast:* Errol Slue (Stuart Mitchell); Roy Lewis (Fountain); Lee MacDougall (Perry); Denise Fergusson.

A black man has a psychic vision from 1858 in which a slave is being pursued across the countryside by his vicious white masters. Somehow, the slave inside his mind takes over the man’s consciousness, and Laura and J.J. must help the modern man reestablish control.

**13. “Killer Instinct”** Written by Richard Manning; Directed by Randy Bradshaw; airdate: December 27, 1991; *Guest Cast:* Lawrence Bayne (Rex Jordan); Jennifer Griffin (Cindy Barton).

A student uses animal pheromones to stimulate ESP between man and animal. Unfortunately, her human subject is an easily hypnotized man with a deep bloodlust—a man who believes he can control the violence of the bloodthirsty wolf he has bonded with telepathically.

• *Second Season (Spring 1992)*

**14. “Sins of the Father”** Written by Alison Bingeman; Directed by Bruce Pittman; airdate: April 17, 1992; *Guest Cast:* Nigel Bennett (Bill Brandt); Brenda Bazinet (Christine Brandt); Ashley Ann Wood (Tina Brandt); Marvin Ishmael (Dean Larry Fleming); Alison Reid (Red Haired Woman).

A little girl named Tina Brandt has visions of a redheaded woman in danger ... and splattered blood. As the visions become more clear, so does the possibility that her parents have been involved which a murder which they are covering up.

**15. “Nightmare Without End”** Written by Richard Manning; Directed by Bruce Pittman; airdate: April 24, 1992; *Guest Cast:* Laura Bruneau (Sheila Foster); Peter Krantz (Ryan); Vince Marino (Landlord).

A new teaching assistant, Celia, joins Laura and J.J. as they create a database of reported psychic phenomenon, at the same time that an old student, Sheila Foster, seeks help from the duo. She has a persistent vision in which a rape is relived again and again, with real physical consequences.

**16. “Matter of Darkness”** Written by James Kahn; Directed by Mario Azzopardi; airdate: May 1, 1992; *Guest Cast:* Leah Pinsent (Jennifer Daly); Simon Reynolds (Douglas); Jeremy Ratchford (Mike); Chandra West (Amanda); Natalie Redford (Ellie); Colm Feore (Voice of Sorcerer).

Jennifer Daly, one of Laura’s more promising students, watches as her grade point average slips precariously due to an elaborate role-playing sword and sorcery game. When Laura receives an invitation to join the unusual game, she and J.J. get involved in the fates of several students who have seemingly vanished into a nether dimension where magic seems real.

**17. “Siren Song”** Written by Marc Scott Zicree; Directed by Mario Azzopardi; airdate: May 8, 1992; *Guest Cast:* Larissa Lapchinski (Emma Moreland); Nancy Sakovich.

A beautiful British archaeologist makes use of the database in J.J. and Laura’s lab to research the myth of the siren: female demons who lure men to their death. Celia and Laura look into her research, even as J.J. falls in love with her, and they discover that there are recent local accounts of a succubus in town.

**18. “Justice”** Written by Robin Jill Bernheim; Directed by Rene Bonniere; airdate: May 15, 1992; *Guest Cast:* John Tench (Stanley Ortega); John Bougeois (Hatch); William Lynn (Warden); G. Donovan Spence (Aaron).

Stanley Ortega, an incarcerated convict on death row, is regularly abused by his jailer, Hatch, and thus resorts to astral projection to escape the torture. J.J. gave expert testimony in Stanley’s case five years earlier and still believes the man is innocent of the murder he was charged with.

**19. “The Fire Within”** Written by Ann-Marie MacDonald; Directed by Rene Bonniere; airdate May 22, 1992; *Guest Cast:* Henri Li (Jimmy); Janet Lo (Susan Tong); Van Flores (Soong); Lawrence Tan (Warrior Spirit).

An Asian boy who Laura once babysat has grown up and joined a dangerous gang. Worse, he has channeled the spirit of a fierce 4th-century professional assassin to protect him from danger on his gang’s missions of vengeance.

**20. “The Color of Mad”** Written by Rob Forsyth; Directed by Eleanore Lindo; airdate: May 29, 1992; *Guest Cast:* Dixie Seatle (Elizabeth Wade); Geordie Johnson (Daniel Barker); Ron Small (Mr. Brewster).

At an art exhibit, a passerby is agitated by a Lovecraftian painting which seems to come to life and attack her. The passerby is Elizabeth Wade, a patient of J.J.’s who once dwelled in a universe inhabited by monsters, and who is now afraid that the beasts, led by a one-eyed monster called “Pitt,” are coming after her again.

• *Third Season (Fall 1992—1993)*

**21. “The Burning Judge”** Written by Gordon Farr; Directed by Allan Kroeker; airdate: September 19, 1992; *Guest Cast:* Rebecca Jenkins (Roxanne/Sally Prynne); Michael Hogan (Judge Jebediah Smith); Richard Hughes (Student #1); Jennifer Martin (Student #2).

A tarot card reader who has performed a demonstration of her skills in Laura’s class is tormented by dreams of a bearded witch hunter and eternal flames. Soon the man of her dreams shows up in the flesh and attempts to burn her out of her home.

**22. “Theatre of the Absurd”** Written by Phil Bedard and Larry Lalonde; Directed by Randy Bradshaw; airdate: September 26, 1992; *Guest Cast:* Lenore Zann (Diane); David Nerman (Brett Morris); Graham Harley (Nigel Wagner), Rick Roberts (Kevin Mechting).

An old theatrical curse comes to violent life after an egotistical actor pronounces the name of a cursed play (*Macbeth*) aloud during rehearsal. Since J.J. and Laura are out for the day at a symposium on clairvoyance, Celia goes to the theater to investigate the claims of a ghost.

**23. “Woman of His Dreams”** Written by Jeremy Lipp; Directed by Eleanore Lindo; airdate: October 3, 1992; *Guest Cast:* Tom McCamus (Richard DeVries); Topaz Hasfal-Schou (The Goddess); Gina Clayton (Alice Westbrook); Barbara Chilcott (Mrs. Claman); Debra Kirshenbaum (Nurse Chubb); Jack Duffy (Derelict).

A surgeon’s work is hampered by something dangerous, and Laura tries to help him because she once loved him. To her shock, Laura discovers that a 12th-century statue of an African goddess has captivated his spirit and is demanding the souls of his patients.

**24. “Nightfall”** Written by Marc Scott Zicree; Directed by Eleanore Lindo; airdate: October 10, 1992; *Guest Cast:* Ashley-Ann Wood (Miranda); Lillian Clune (Eve); Stella Sprowell (Elder Miranda); Marium Carvell (Nurse); Jack Mather (Caretaker).

After performing a magic show at a child’s birthday party, J.J. is involuntarily pulled into a strange lavender world where a young girl asks him to do magic for her. When J.J. awakes from his fugue state, he becomes convinced that Miranda is somewhere in the park, and in desperate need of help to boot, but the answer to this puzzle is a surprising one.

**25. “Dancing with the Man”** Written by Hans Beimler; Directed by Alan Kroeker; airdate: October 17, 1992; *Guest Cast:* Sam Behrens, Conrad Coates, Jim Warren.

Laura finds her grip on reality tenuous after an accident which seems to leave her suffering from the

effects of temporal distortion.

**26. “The Dying of the Light”** Written by Richard Manning; Directed by Alan Kroeker; airdate: October 24, 1992; *Guest Cast:* Gordon Pinsent (Professor Nolan Randolph); David Orth (Young Randolph).

A professor friend of J.J.’s invites Wingate, Stillman, and Celia to a party in which he intends to debate the nature of evil. During the celebration, the professor unexpectedly transforms into a ghoulish beast, and his parapsychologist friends suspect demonic possession.

**27. “A Kiss is Just a Psi”** Written by James Kahn; Directed by Randy Bradshaw; airdate: October 31, 1992; *Guest Cast:* David Hewlett (Tom Fairbanks Jr.); Elias Zarou (Swami Raku); Helen Hughes (Mrs. Froi); Robbie Rox (Maître d’/Arthur).

A parapsychology student named Tom has an erotic dream which turns sour as Laura meets her doom at the hands of Swami Raku, a con artist conducting a fake séance at the Windsor Arms Hotel. When Tom awakens, he discovers his dream was a precognition and that Laura really is in danger.

**28. “Late for Dinner”** Written by Rob Forsyth; Directed by Randy Bradshaw; airdate: November 7, 1992; *Guest Cast:* Bernard Behrens (Old Man McCaster); Caroline Yeager (Mrs. McCaster); Ian D. Clark, Marc Marut, Mark Parr, Adrian Egan.

At Dean Fleming’s request, J.J. and Laura investigate a haunting at the home of a wealthy university contributor, the McCaster family. The unusual incidents in the strife-filled house seem to stem from a portrait of a medieval warrior which refuses to hang straight on the dining room wall.

**29. “Where There’s Smoke”** Written by James Kahn; Directed by Ken Girotti; airdate: November 14, 1992; *Guest Cast:* Peter MacNeill (Michael); Nicholas Shields (Quinn).

J.J. and Laura take off after a vanished archaeology professor who was searching for lost gold in a forest. The treasure he sought is rumored to be protected by a demon, but a strange mist holds the key to the mystery.

**30. “Demon in the Flame”** Written by Ralph Phillips; Directed by Ken Girotti; airdate: November 21, 1992; *Guest Cast:* Brooke Johnson (Becky Fullman); Michael Rhoades (Firefighter); Errol Slue (Chief); Victor Ertmanis (The Father); Katie Coristine (Young Becky).

A female firefighter has the unusual psychic ability to predict fires, but her unusual gift provokes fear and suspicion on the part of her co-workers. Making matters worse, her father was an arsonist, and some people believe she may be following in his footsteps and setting the very conflagrations she predicts.

**31. “A Mind of Their Own”** Written by Richard C. Okie and Robin Jill Bernheim; Directed by Stefan Scaini; airdate: December 5, 1992; *Guest Cast:* Lindsey Connell (Jamie); Fab Filippo (Thrill); Steve Jackson (Fatboy); Richard Chevolleau (Dave).

Laura returns to the office late one night to find herself psychically ambushed by two powerful young men and a girl named Jamie. Laura’s memory of the assault is erased, but J.J. helps her remember who

her attackers were ... and learns that the assailants are part of a powerful hive mind.

**32. “Final Flight”** Written by Judith Reeves-Stevens and Garfield Reeves-Stevens; Directed by Stefan Scaini; airdate: December 12, 1992; *Guest Cast:* David Fox (Colonel Franklin); Ann-Marie MacDonald (Doctor); Bruce Tubbe (Lt. Ben Michaelson).

During a dangerous space walk, astronaut Ben Michaelson goes insane and is nearly killed. J.J., an expert in hypnotic regression, is aboard a transport plane to treat him ... and the answer to his problem could be related to alien contact.

**33. “Facing the Wall”** Written by James Kahn; Directed by Allan Kroeker; airdate: December 19, 1992; *Guest Cast:* Wayne Robson (Alex Shore/1125).

A meek little clothing inspector, Alex Shore, comes to visit J.J. and reports that his dream world is seeming more and more real to him of late. Shore then suffers a stroke and loses the ability to speak, so J.J. uses biofeedback to enter Alex’s bizarre, black-and-white totalitarian dream world.

**34. “Inner Ear”** Written by Richard Manning; Directed by Allan Kroeker; airdate: January 9, 1993; *Guest Cast:* Judah Katz (Grant); Tom Cavanagh (Doug); Natsuko Ohama (Chemistry Professor); Henrietta Ivanens (Students); Robin Avery, Jennifer Martin, Scott Spidell.

A young chemistry student has invented a psi-enhancing concoction, which Celia drinks. Soon, Celia is hearing the thoughts of her colleagues and friends, and finding it hard to believe what people actually think of her.

**35. “Dead Air”** Written by Durnford King; Directed by Stefan Scaini; airdate: January 16, 1993; *Guest Cast:* Colm Feore (Mason Driscoll); Conrad Bergschneider (The Crusher); Joan Luchak (Old Woman); Carol Ng (Female Victim in car); Louis Strauss (Old Man).

Celia is convinced that a radio show’s supernatural star, “The Crusher,” is murdering women in the real world. The next night, the Crusher, a beast with a metal plate in his skull, kills again, forcing Laura and Celia to investigate the possibility that the monster thrives on his creator’s imagination.

**36. “Let’s Play House”** Written by David Bennett Carren and J. Larry Carroll; Directed by Stefan Scaini; airdate: January 23, 1993; *Guest Cast:* Peter Spence (Robert “Wally” Wallace).

A strange man visits the department of parapsychology and claims that he can time travel back to the year 1959. Sure enough, “Wally” can create his own inner world resembling the “perfect” fifties, and he traps Celia there after transforming her into a housewife named Donna.

**37. “The Loving Cup”** Written by James Kahn; Directed by Bruce Pittman; airdate: January 30, 1993; *Guest Cast:* David Hewlett (Tom); Elias Zarou (Swami Raku); Marion Gilsenan (Mrs. DuParr); Tom Kneebone (Carmichael); Kim Bourne (Woman).

At a showing of Celtic artifacts, Laura, Celia, and J.J. learn that an ancient goblet is said to hold the secret of love. The spell works inadvertently on Celia, J.J., Laura, and others.

**38. “The Passion”** Written by Marc Scott Zicree; Directed by Bruce Pittman; airdate: February 6, 1993; *Guest Cast:* Leon Powtall, Sam Malkin.

J.J. is presented with his great grandfather's journal from a mysterious stranger. His great grandfather, the black sheep of his family, was called upon one night in December of 1888 to save the life of a beautiful young woman who was bitten by a vampire. A physician, he was assisted in his efforts by a witch, Ariel, in hunting down the undead bloodsucker.

**39. "Forget Me Not"** Written by Judith and Garfield Reeves-Stevens; Directed by Hans Beimler; airdate: February 13, 1993; *Guest Cast:* Lynda Mason Green (Dr. Monica Harwood); Cali Timmins (Billie Haines); Edward Jaunz, Ted Hanlan.

A doctor has invented a machine which can first visualize and then remove the painful memories of others, but she then stores and keeps those memories, some of them erotic, and lives vicariously through them. One patient subjected to this experimental treatment is a former client of Stillman's, a client who is now experiencing significant amnesia.

**40. "Face-Off"** Written by Richard Raskind; Directed by Ken Girotti; airdate: February 20, 1993; *Guest Cast:* Allan Royal, Toby Proctor, Jeremiah McCann, David Nerman.

A young hockey player who is given the jersey of a legendary player shows signs of violence when he wears it on the ice. J.J. is coaching the high-school team, and he sees the change in the boy's demeanor ... a change which involves the channeling of a dead man's spirit.

**41. "Keepsake"** Written by Marc Scott Zicree; Directed by William Fruet; airdate: February 27, 1993; *Guest Cast:* Linda Griffith (Cassandra "Cassie"); Joel Bissonnette (Johnny Woodbridge).

A man suffering from amnesia and strange "memories" goes to see Laura and J.J. to help him learn if he has been reincarnated. They use regression hypnosis to find Johnny's home, but the mystery doesn't end there: using magic called the Symbol of Thanatos, John's lonely ex-girlfriend, now an older woman, is draining life-force energy from Laura to keep him alive.

**42. "The Box"** Written by Judith and Garfield Reeves-Stevens; Directed by Allan Kroeker; airdate: March 6, 1993; *Guest Cast:* Lynne Thomson (Diane); Jeff Leder (Andrew); Richard Fitzpatrick (Andrew).

After a fancy dress occasion, Laura, Celia, J.J., Celia's blind date, and a married couple discover a necromancy box in the parapsychology office which transports them all to another dimension ... one which may be filled with demons. They have opened Pandora's Box, and now have just one hour to find the box again, or take the demon's place inside for all eternity.

**43. "Reunion"** Written by J. Larry Carroll and David Bennett Carren; Directed by Allan Kroeker; airdate: March 13, 1993; *Guest Cast:* Martin Julien (Mike Stillman); Andrew Dohla (Pollard); Rob Smith.

J.J. falls asleep while working on a dissertation about astral projection and awakens to find himself aboard his father's submarine, the *Blue Fin*, during World War II, in the body of a journalist who, according to history, saved the doomed ship. When the engine section is flooded, J.J. remembers his history and attempts to save the sub at the same time he makes peace with his father.

**44. "Bloodstone"** Written by Richard Manning; Directed by Rene Bonniere; airdate: March 20, 1993;



*Guest Cast:* John Colicos (St. Clair); Hayley Tyson (Kim Thomas); Hans Engel (Garth).

A cult leader of the “First Cabal” is offended when Laura and reporter Kim Thomas remark that his seemingly magic powers are bunk and that he has merely brainwashed his many followers. St. Clair uses a bloodstone to frighten and capture Laura, but she teams with J.J. and Celia to stop him from using the bloodstone to access her deepest fear (of drowning).

## *Nightmare Cafe* (1992)

### CRITICAL RECEPTION

“*Cafe* doesn’t have any of the graphic shocks of Craven’s feature films; instead it has a tediously complicated premise.... Englund in particular is wasted in this series; he can be an amusing, inventive actor, but here he’s required only to smirk smugly and literally wink at the camera. *Nightmare Cafe* is certainly different: Lots of TV shows are dull and/or stupid—this series is dull, stupid, and really annoying.”—Ken Tucker, *Entertainment Weekly*, February 28, 1992, page 42.

“a Wes Craven riff on *Alfred Hitchcock* and *The Twilight Zone*. A cast of regulars, including the talented Lindsay Frost, the hyper Jack Coleman and a creepy Robert Englund ... hang around being dead in a dive on the Hudson.... You never know from the special effects what’s on the other side of any door, and the only channel on the television set is tuned to alternative realities. So far, rather witty.”—John Leonard, *New York*, March 2, 1992, page 59.

### FORMAT

The *Nightmare Cafe* is a strange, limbo-world where virtually anything is possible. The cafe appears to be an all-nite diner, but each door inside the bizarre establishment is a gateway which can lead to the past, the future, a second chance, an alternate universe, or even bloody retribution. As this one-hour series from creator Wes Craven unfurls, the only inhabitant of the strange cafe is a gent called Blackie (Robert Englund), a bearded fellow with an edgy, sardonic personality and a propensity to talk directly to the audience, thereby breaking the fourth wall.

Two lost souls, Frank (Jack Coleman) and Ivy (Lindsay Frost) are recruited by Blackie in the afterlife to serve (respectively) as the short-order cook and waitress in the cafe. Together, this trio caters to all varieties of visitors, all with interesting problems, histories, and dilemmas which need resolution. The cafe can travel anywhere in time and space, so in the course of the short-lived series Frank finds himself back in his hometown confronting old ghosts in “Sanctuary for a Child.” Ivy too meets up with her past, specifically her delinquent young sister in “Faye and Ivy.”

During the brief run of *Nightmare Cafe*, it is learned that the cafe has a personality, and that it can even get its feelings hurt when insulted or slighted. As for Blackie, he is a long-lived being who can appear in the drama as himself, as the narrator, or as any player: a cabbie, a cop, or anything else he desires. Some stories on *Nightmare Cafe* are more satiric than horrific (“Aliens Ate My Lunch” by Wes Craven) but almost all the stories attempt to make some kind of moral statement. The horror in the series comes from the cafe’s ability to right the scales of justice. The bad are punished (a hick sheriff is carted away by aliens in the aforementioned “Aliens Ate My Lunch” and a businessman dumping toxic waste ends up in a drum of his own foul brew in the pilot), and the good are rewarded.

### HISTORY

Wes Craven, the auteur of *The Last House on the Left* (1972), *The Hills Have Eyes* (1977), *Deadly Blessing* (1981), *A Nightmare on Elm Street* (1984), and a variety of other genre triumphs found his

talents in great demand in the late 1980s. He had launched the Freddy Krueger phenomenon for New Line Cinema (which is still known in the industry as “The House that Freddy Built”), struck box-office gold with *The Serpent and the Rainbow* (1987) based on the nonfiction book by Wade Davis, and become something of a modern horror legend: one of a select group of “horror maestros” along with John Carpenter, George Romero, Tobe Hooper, and David Cronenberg. After Craven wrapped production on his latest film, *The People Under the Stairs* (1991), NBC television, which had noted with interest the success of unusual programming such as *Twin Peaks*, approached the horror director in hopes that he might transmute his cult popularity to high TV ratings in much the same manner David Lynch had used his status as pop icon to fire up enthusiasm for *Twin Peaks*.

Craven was no stranger to television production, and during the lean years of his off-and-on moviemaking career had directed many highly-rated TV films and series installments as varied as *A Stranger in Our House* (1978) starring Linda Blair, *Invitation to Hell* (1984) starring Susan Lucci, *Chiller* (1984) starring Michael Beck, *Night Vision* (1990) starring James Remar, and the mid-80s CBS revival of *The Twilight Zone* (episodes: “Shatterday” by Harlan Ellison, “A Little Peace and Quiet,” “Wordplay,” “Chameleon,” “Dealer’s Choice,” “Her Pilgrim Soul” and “The Road Less Traveled”). For NBC, Craven (who had once been described by Robert Englund as Rod Serling’s “heir apparent”) came up with a unique concept which expanded on the dream/nightmares and “rubber reality” ethos he had championed with such success in *A Nightmare on Elm Street*, *Serpent and the Rainbow*, and *Shocker* (1989).

Described simply as “*The Twilight Zone* meets *Cheers*,” Craven and co-writer Thomas Baum (*Night Vision*) of *The Hitchhiker*, came up with a bizarre and untried semi-anthology format wherein horror star Robert Englund (late of the syndicated Lorimar series *Freddy’s Nightmares*) would be a narrator/host at the same time he would play a character (sometimes several characters) within the drama. The setting for this new show was a mysterious all-nite diner which, like *The Twilight Zone* before it, meted out a kind of cosmic justice with help of two down-on-their-luck (and apparently deceased!) individuals. Craven described the unusual central concept of *Nightmare Cafe* in this manner:

two people inherit a cafe that’s somewhere between life and death; they serve as moderators and participate in the stories. People ... come to experience their worst nightmare ... turning point ... comeuppance ... breakthrough.... Robert Englund plays three characters in the cafe, including the resident cynic.<sup>1</sup>

This was certainly a promising idea for a TV series, with an open-ended, flexible format, since the *Nightmare Cafe* could seemingly go anywhere in time and space, and be visited by ghosts, gangsters, and even old girlfriends. Craven helped matters by recruiting top talent to direct. Philip Noyce (*Sliver* [1992], *Patriot Games* [1993]), Armand Mastroianni (*Friday the 13th: The Series*) and Craven himself each helmed various episodes, and the writing chores were handled by Chris Leitch (*The Hitchhiker*), John Leekley (later of the excellent *Kindred: The Embraced*), and, again, Wes Craven. Guest stars were also impressive with Angela Bassett (*What’s Love Got to Do with It?* [1993], *Strange Days* [1995], *How Stella Got Her Groove Back* [1998]), Joan Chen (*The Blood of Heroes* [1989]), Beth Toussaint (*Monsters*: “Sleeping Dragon,” *Star Trek: The Next Generation*: “Legacy”), John DiAquino (*Seaquest DSV* [1993-96]), William B. Davis (the infamous “Cigarette Smoking Man” on *The X-Files*), Brandon Adams (*The People Under the Stairs*) and Vondie-Curtis Hall of *Eve’s Bayou* [1997]) making the rounds. The only bad news was that NBC immediately relegated *Nightmare Cafe* to the

Friday night graveyard, a night wherein most of its intended audience would be out at the theater watching horror films instead of staying home to watch horror TV.

*Nightmare Cafe* began its run in January of 1992, aired just six episodes by the end of April, and was then canceled. The series was unsuccessful not only because it was scheduled badly (and sporadically) but because it had not been given adequate time to develop. In addition, audiences did not quite know how to take the show. It was almost as much fantasy as it was straight horror, and so was greeted with some ennui by long-time Craven fans (who may have been expecting *Last House on the Left*-style intensity modulated for TV).

Though *Nightmare Cafe* died an early and untimely death, its writers and creators went on to bigger and better things. Wes Craven found huge mainstream success with *Scream* (1996) and *Scream 2* (1997), as well as with a brand name horror franchise called *Wes Craven Presents* (*Mind Ripper* [1995], *Wishmaster* [1997], *Don't Look Down* [1998], *Wes Craven Presents Carnival of Souls* [1998]) while *Nightmare Cafe* was dispatched to infrequent runs on the Sci-Fi Channel's "Series Collection" (which airs at 5:00 A.M. on Sunday mornings). Considering Craven's remarkable talents, the death of this series is a shame, as it could have grown into something quite special with a little more evolution time.

### CRITICAL COMMENTARY

It is always hard to rate a TV series which lasts for so few episodes. With only a few stories on hand to view and judge, it is not easy to determine if the program might have been bound for greatness, or merely for mediocrity. In the case of Wes Craven's *Nightmare Cafe*, this much might be ascertained: it lacks the fast pace and paranoid veneer of *Prey* (1998), the visual style of *Brimstone* (1999), the paranoia and hard edge of *Strange World* (1999), and the epic sweep of *Kindred: The Embraced* (1996), yet it is of higher quality than *Quinn Martin's Tales of the Unexpected* (1977) or *Stephen King's The Golden Years* (1991). That tally places this 1992 series somewhere in the middle of the pack of short-lived horror TV series (programs with less than fifteen episodes). At least in the case of *Nightmare Cafe* the central premise was broad and interesting, even if its promise was never fulfilled.

The six episodes of *Nightmare Cafe* are a mismatched group of stories, a stylistic jumble. One tale is an introduction (the pilot) to the main characters, one is family melodrama ("Faye and Ivy"), one is *Touched by an Angel* (1994-?) territory ("Sanctuary for a Child") and one is social commentary conveyed through satire ("Aliens Ate My Lunch"). If anything, this variety of subject matter displays the series' intrinsic strength: it could accommodate any style/genre of story without unduly stretching its elastic format. At the same time, it is important to note that TV viewers long for consistency in their weekly dramas. They return to their "habit" each week to see more of the same. They get a courtroom trial one week on *The Practice* (1997-?) and they tune in again for another trial the following week. The details may change, but viewers know pretty much what to expect. Not so with *Nightmare Cafe*, which was unpredictable in every installment (despite remaining true to its admittedly open format). And although there were downright horrific elements (ghosts appeared and disappeared, people died and went to the afterlife, bad guys opened doors in the cafe only to be mowed down on a shooting range), horror was only a piece of the overall puzzle. Still, the series is included here because of its genealogy. Any time Wes Craven works on television, the project is bound to be of interest.

Perhaps the biggest problem with *Nightmare Cafe* (which could have been rectified in time, maybe)

was that the rules of the otherworldly cafe were not set clearly enough. Although the audience learns in “Faye and Ivy” that the cafe has a personality and can even get its feelings hurt, exactly what the cafe *really* is, what it represents, is largely uninvestigated. Is it one of God’s mechanisms? Is it God? Is it a life form unto itself? Is it a device? What powers and sustains it? The cafe, a shape-shifting, dimension-hopping vehicle, could have been as well-defined as the TARDIS on *Doctor Who*, simultaneously a vehicle and a fully-integrated character and known quantity. Sadly, the series never quite got to that point. Instead, it is just a mystery, and because its capabilities are not known, it often served as a *deus ex machina* solution for stories. When in trouble, the characters could always discover something “new” about the cafe which might save their lives.

Robert Englund, Lindsay Frost, and Jack Coleman are enormously appealing performers and solid leads, but again their *Nightmare Cafe* characters do not quite have the time to attain “beloved” status or resonate deeply with audiences. In some installments they are purely functionary, like Doc, Gopher, or Isaac on *The Love Boat* (1977–1986). In this capacity, they are but wallpaper, and the guest star of the week takes center stage. In other shows (“Faye and Ivy” and “Sanctuary for a Child” in particular) the central characters play more significant and meaningful roles.

Again, it is awfully difficult to determine which way the series might have gone: towards a *Fantasy Island* (1978–1984) universe of generic, plastic characters, or into an *X-Files* or *Twilight Zone* level of distinction. “The Monsters Are Due on Maple Street” commentary of “Aliens Ate My Lunch” indicates that Craven intended for *Nightmare Cafe* to have a potent voice on issues such as discrimination and the mob mentality, but whether the series would have run with that idea is really anybody’s guess.

*Nightmare Cafe* may be most illuminating not as a genre series, but when seen in context of Craven’s thirty-year show business career. It is his attempt to bring the “rubber reality” of the ’80s horror franchises to TV, and he is largely successful in doing so. Transitions from one “reality” to another are accomplished adroitly, and the special effects are uniformly terrific. At the same time, Blackie’s (sometimes moralistic) monologues directed straight to the audience break down the fourth-wall of television, and are an early indication of Wes Craven’s propensity to be reflexive in his approach to art (a format he later went whole hog with in *Wes Craven’s New Nightmare* [1994], *Scream* [1996], and *Scream 2* [1997]). That Blackie could be both commentator and participant in *Nightmare Cafe* is of great significance. The self-aware teenagers of *Scream*, and the “is this a horror movie or reality?” tightrope of *Wes Craven’s New Nightmare* are clearly extensions of Craven’s tendency to deconstruct traditional horror forms and forge something new from the ashes of the old. *Nightmare Cafe* and Englund’s multifaceted Blackie character might be seen as the root of all that Pirandello-esque questioning and questioning of dramatic boundaries. If so, then *Cafe* is valuable historically, if for no other reason. It shows us an artist working out his ideas, if not giving them the full flower of the intelligence that the concept would generate in later productions.

## CAST AND CREDITS

*Cast:* Robert Englund (Blackie); Jack Coleman (Frank Nolan); Lindsay Frost (Fay Perronovic).

*Credits:* *Creators:* Wes Craven and Thomas Baum. *Developed by:* Jonathan Craven, Peter Spears. *Senior Producer:* Marianne Maddalena. *Producers:* Bruce A. Pobjoy, Thomas Baum. *Executive Producer:* Wes Craven. *Line Producer:* Ron Colby. *Creative Consultants:* Jonathan Craven, Peter Spears. *Executive Consultant:* Phillip Noyce. *Director of Photography:* Mark Irwin. *Production*

*Designer:* Richard Kent Wilcox. *Editors:* Richard Francis Bruce, Patrick Lussier. *Unit Production Manager:* Joseph Patrick Finn. *First Assistant Director:* Anthony Atkins. *Second Assistant Director:* Morgan James Beggs. *Music:* J. Peter Robinson. *Special Visual Effects:* Bill Millar. *Casting:* Gary M. Zuckerbrod. *Costume Designer:* Susan DeLaval. *Set Decorator:* Marti Wright. *Property Master:* Bryan D. Korenberg. *Chief Lighting Technician:* Stephen Jackson. *Key Grip:* Dillard Brinson. *Sound Mixer:* Lars Ekstrom. *Construction Coordinator:* Douglas Hardwick. *Camera Operator:* Roderick J. Pridy. *Video Playback Coordinator:* Klaus Melchoir. *Location Manager:* Todd Pittson. *Stunt Coordinator:* Jacob Rupp. *Wardrobe Supervisor:* Susan Stella. *Costume Supervisor:* Donna M. Cristiano. *Makeup Artist:* Connie Parker. *Hairstylist:* Julie McHaffie. *Special Effects:* Bill Orr. *Script Supervisor:* Jean Bereziuk. *Production Coordinator:* Carol Schafer, Wendy Lavis. *Assistants to the Producers:* Jeffrey Fenner, Chris Parker. *Canadian Casting:* Trish Robinson. *Assistant Editors:* Ron Yoshida, Stein Myhrstad. *Music-Editing:* Bunny Andrews. *Rerecording:* Gregory Watkins, John Stephens, Bill W. Benton. *Music Supervision:* Richard Kaufman. *Main Title Design:* Bill Millar, Deena Burkett. *Lab Services:* Gastown Film Labs. *Post-Production Services:* Gastown Post and Transfer; Filmed at North Shore Studios, British Vancouver; Wes Craven Films in association with MGM/UA Television Productions.

## EPISODE GUIDE

**1. “Nightmare Cafe”/“Pilot”** Written by Wes Craven and Thomas Baum; Directed by Phillip Noyce; airdate: January 29, 1992; *Guest Cast:* Joan Chen (First Customer); John DiAquino (Al); Philip Hayes (Driver); Carrie-Anne Moss (Amanda); Bill Croft (Thug).

Perennial losers Faye Perronovic and Frank Nolan reach a strange road cafe after dying unhappy deaths. Inside the cafe, they are introduced to another denizen, the enigmatic Blackie. Blackie informs the duo that they have been hired (as waitress and short order cook respectively) to help this cafe mete out a peculiar form of justice to all those who enter. The first order of business, however, is to replay the deaths of Faye and Frank, and give them each a second chance to end their lives with dignity.

**2. “Dying Well Is the Best Revenge”** Written by Barry Pullman; Directed by Armand Mastroianni; airdate: March 6, 1992; *Guest Cast:* Beth Toussaint (Angela); Justin Deas (Edward); Jo-Anne Bates (Jan); Holly Chester (Tracy); Doug Stewart (Ambulance Driver); Andrew Airlie (Darryn).

Angela and Edward have a bad marriage riddled with infidelity and lies. This couple becomes entangled with the otherworldly cafe when Edward is beaten and stabbed on the docks near the cafe by a man named Darrin. Frank grows increasingly attracted to Angela, apparently an abused wife, but Fay and Blackie learn that Angela and Darrin are lovers, and that Frank is being set up as a patsy to murder Edward! To put things right they must harness all the resources of the cafe.

**3. “Faye and Ivy”** Written by Wes Craven, Thomas Baum, John Leekley; Directed by Chris Leitch; airdate: March 13, 1992; *Guest Cast:* Molly Parker (Ivy); Peter Outerbridge (Jesse); Penny Fuller (Victoria); Liquor Store Owner (Randall Wong).

For years, Faye has been sending letters to her younger sister Ivy detailing her life as the rich paramour of an important businessman. Believing these correspondences, Ivy and her delinquent boyfriend, Jesse, have left home in Oklahoma to find Faye, and share in her wealth. Unfortunately, Jesse is a delinquent hoping to make a quick buck, and when Faye can't ante up, he puts Ivy's life at risk.

**4. “The Heart of the Mystery”** Written by Christopher Stone and Bruce Cameron; Director John Harrison; airdate: March 20, 1992; *Guest Cast:* Timothy Carhart (Detective Gates); Laura Mae Tate (Charlotte Benning); Denis Forest (Phil Benning); Alfonso Quijada (Kid).

Detective Stan Gates has been obsessed with the murder of Charlotte Benning for a decade and a half. The heiress was murdered in her beautiful mansion one night while her wheelchair bound husband lay unconscious on the floor. When Stan is shot on duty, his soul travels to the all-nite cafe and he is granted a chance to go back in time and witness the crime.

**5. “Sanctuary for a Child”** Written by John Leekley; Directed by Armand Mastroianni; airdate: March 27, 1992; *Guest Cast:* Brandon Adams (Luke); Angela Bassett (Evelyn); William B. Davis (Doctor); Vondie Curtis Hall (Thomas); Hillary Strang (Nurse); Walter Marsh (Mr. Cartwright).

The cafe materializes in a beautiful town at dawn, and a lost African American boy enters the cafe. He is Luke, son of Frank’s dearest friends back in his hometown, and his soul is trapped in limbo as his physical body lays dying in a local hospital. Frank’s task is not only to arrange the reconciliation of Luke’s separated parents so the boy’s spirit can flee to heaven, but also to make peace with his own dead father—a man who was a bigot.

**6. “Aliens Ate My Lunch”** Written by Wes Craven; Directed by Wes Craven; airdate: April 3, 1992; *Guest Cast:* Bobby Slayton (Harry Tambor); Don S. Davis (Sheriff Dan Filcher); Arturo Gil (Winston/“Wind”); Kevin Thompson (Fred/“Fire”); Jimmy Briscoe (Earl/“Earth”); Scott Swanson (Editor); Stephen E. Miller (Deputy); Suzie Payne (Drugstore Mum); Adrien Dorval (Elmore); Smitty Smith (Hardware Codger); John R. Taylor (Station Farmer).

Blackie guides the cafe to a rural town in America’s heartland so Frank can have a rendezvous with his hero, *National Conspirer* columnist Harry Tambor. Desperate to find a story, Tambor concocts a massive hoax and convinces the town that alien invaders have landed in a flying saucer. To Tambor’s surprise, his story is not as unbelievable as it sounds, and three mysterious dwarves share a strange secret.

## *Forever Knight* (1992–1996)

### CRITICAL RECEPTION

“*Forever Knight* ... trades on the popularity of other sci-fi and fantasy series—most notably the immortal-and-swords action series *Highlander* and Anne Rice’s *Vampire Chronicles*—but manages to retain some cheap thrills of its own.... Derided as a *Highlander* rip-off, *Forever Knight* has found a niche ... it seems to be holding its own against newer syndicated cult shows.”—*Net Trek*, A Michael Wolff Book, 1995, page 322.

“a good three time zones beyond farfetched, but at least maintains a ghoulish kind of style.”—David Hiltbrand, *People*, May 25, 1992, page 11.

“The first couple episodes of this series are imaginative, silly, frustrating, and dumb. On the one hand, *Knight* is a typical ’90s TV hero, full of chin stubble, bad attitude and philosophical hooley.... On the other hand, *Forever Knight* takes the guilt-ridden vampire idea ... and turns it into a compelling subtext for a cop show.... A shave for *Knight* and better writers are my immediate recommendations.”—Ken Tucker, *Entertainment Weekly*, May 22, 1992, page 63.

### FORMAT

*Forever Knight* is the moody chronicle of the soulful Nick Knight (Geraint Wyn-Davies), a handsome (but tortured) Toronto homicide cop who has a dark secret: he’s a creature of the night, a vampire. Nick became undead in AD 1228, shortly after returning from combat during the Crusades. After centuries of hiding from the sun, fearing religious symbols and drinking human blood, Nicholas began to miss his humanity, his mortality. He had a strange change of heart and wished to walk freely in the daytime among his former prey. Now, in the mid-1990s, Nick will do just about anything to become mortal again, to look forward to the possibility of death and, eventually, salvation.

Such is Nick’s great quest: redemption and forgiveness. He is aided in his journey by the beautiful and resourceful Natalie Lambert (Catherine Disher), a Toronto coroner who has learned Nick’s secret, fallen in love with him, and worked to develop a cure for his vampirism. As a busy cop, Nick hides his secret from all others, including his wise-cracking partner Schanke (John Kapelos) and his sullen police captain, Stonetree (Gary Farmer). Making Nick’s journey back to humanity all the more problematic, Nick also frequently interacts with his undead “family,” including a kind of “sister”/“lover,” Janette (Deborah Duchene), who owns the vampire night club called the Raven, and his “father,” Lucien LaCroix (Nigel Bennett), a deeply philosophical antihero and ancient vampire who first “came across” in Pompeii to avoid death when Vesuvius erupted. Now, in Toronto, LaCroix has become the “Nightcrawler,” a late-night radio talk-show host with a brooding delivery. Nick’s powers as a vampire (incredible speed, heightened strength, and even flight) make him an effective police officer, and he stalks the town in his batlike car, a 1962 green Cadillac convertible.

In the second and third years of *Forever Knight*, cast changes were in the offing. At the end of the second season, the humorous Schanke, who always joked about his unseen wife, Myra, died in a plane crash along with Stonetree’s replacement, the gruff Captain Amanda Cohen (Natsuko Ohama). Nick



was despondent over the double losses, and reluctantly teamed up with a new partner, a young beautiful blond rookie named Tracy Vetter (Lisa Ryder). Tracy's father was a cop, so Tracy always tried to avoid special treatment and earn recognition for her own work rather than her father's reputation. Also new in the precinct was the show's third captain, Joe Reese (Blu Mankuma). More accessible than his predecessors, Reese also tended to get more directly involved in the action. Finally, Janette left the series to "find her humanity," and she was replaced by a Spanish conquistador vampire named Vachon (Ben Bass). Vachon and Nick knew of one another, but Tracy took special pains to keep them apart, although she knew Vachon was a vampire. Another recurring character in the third season was Urs (Kristin Lehman), a beautiful blond vamp.

A fairly complex series, *Forever Knight* is simultaneously crime-driven (in that it deals with homicide investigations week in and week out) and history-driven, revisiting Nick's long history as a vampire. The show's central conceit, however, is its most interesting. *Forever Knight* posits the thought that vampirism is an addiction, analogous to alcoholism, and that Nick is, in essence, a recovering addict. Thus in his three years on the air, Knight feels the pains of withdrawal, falls off the wagon, goes on a blood bender, enters a twelve step "self help" program, and so forth, while friend Natalie remains constant in her attempts to rehumanize him.

An hour-long drama, *Forever Knight* never really found a good home on TV during its first run. After its first season on the CBS *Crime Time After Prime Time* slot it was booted unceremoniously from the air, only to continue for a second season in syndication. The series, shot in Toronto, was then picked up by the USA Network for a third year ... and just as abruptly dropped. The center of a massive cult following in 1999, *Forever Knight* still hangs on today through its reruns on the Sci-Fi Channel, and there is hope for a reunion movie or new series ... though the shocking last episode of the series seems to preclude such a possibility.

## HISTORY

Author Anne Rice deserves a great deal of the credit for changing the way the world (and even Hollywood) views vampires. When she wrote *Interview with the Vampire*, *The Vampire Lestat*, and its various sequels, she put a new spin on an age-old legend. Suddenly, the undead had feelings too, and vampires became tortured creatures with whom audiences could sympathize, rather than merely frightening, pure-evil, long-toothed villains in black capes. This reinterpretation of the vampire mythos has fueled a whole new generation of vampire stories, from the rethought *Bram Stoker's Dracula* (1992) directed by Francis Ford Coppola to the new Joss Whedon series, *Angel* (1999–). The Canadian 1992–1996 series *Forever Knight* also falls into this category of "revisionist vampires," but there is another inspiration working here as well. The TV series *Highlander* (1992–1998), a spin-off from the feature film series starring Christopher Lambert, became a hit by adroitly mixing action (swordplay), present-day adventures, and the historical exploits of its lead character, a creature called an "immortal." *Forever Knight* duplicated this formula to an uncomfortable degree by mixing the past and present adventures of a different kind of immortal: the vampire. Surprisingly, however, *Forever Knight* truly went somewhere interesting with a concept which could easily be derided as derivative, and it became a cult hit which (this author believes) is a far more relevant and far better show than *Highlander*.

*Forever Knight* embarked on its TV life span as *Nick Knight*, a two-hour pilot for a series which was broadcast on CBS during the late summer of 1989. It starred former pop-sensation Rick Springfield (*Battlestar Galactica*: "Saga of a Star World") as the titular vampire cop. Although the pilot obtained

solid ratings and good reviews (for the most part), the series was ultimately *not* picked up by CBS, for reasons unknown. Instead, years passed before creators James D. Parriott and Barney Cohen were able to try again. In 1992, a totally recast show, now entitled *Forever Knight*, was lensed in Toronto. The only cast member returning from the 1989 Springfield production was John Kapelos, the comedic partner “Schanke.” Geraint Wyn-Davies, a regular on USA’s continuation of CBS’s *Airwolf* and a recurring performer on *Dracula: The Series*, assumed the lead role in the series, which bowed in May of 1992 on ... surprisingly ... CBS! While the show aired in its native Canada on CTV, *Forever Knight* aired in America on the CBS schedule known as *Crime Time after Prime Time*, along with *Sweating Bullets*, a kind of erotic detective series. As the show opened, Wyn-Davies almost immediately became a fan favorite with his sensitive, sometimes agonized, portrayal of an angst-ridden creature of the night. As Davies has stated before, this rich, multilayered part was a godsend for him:

I liked the fact that he was steeped in the past and yet in the present at the same time. I liked the moral dilemma he went through. I liked the fact that it was a man struggling with an addiction. It was sort of a classical television show ... a neogothic, pop classic.<sup>1</sup>

With a likable, charismatic lead in Wyn-Davies, and an equally interesting romantic partner in Catherine Disher (formerly seen in the second season of Paramount’s *War of the Worlds* [1988-90]), *Forever Knight* performed well in the late-night ratings war despite its low budget. Even as fans responded to the series with passion, CBS made a switch. It hired David Letterman from NBC (after that network had replaced the retiring Johnny Carson with Jay Leno) and decided that his new talk show should occupy the time slot filled by the *Crime Time after Prime Time* program block. As a result, *Crime Time after Prime Time*, including *Forever Knight*, was ditched. This left the producers of the popular *Forever Knight* in a mad scramble, but the series was picked up in syndication after about a year, and in the end actually aired (again!) on some CBS affiliates around the United States. In fact, in syndication, *Forever Knight* was seen on 175 stations, which represented more than 91 percent of the country. In the overcrowded syndicated market of the '90s, this breakthrough was quite an accomplishment! Among those airing the series were WBBM in Chicago, and KCBS in Los Angeles.

As the improved second season unfolded in syndication, a strong fan base grew, popularity was maintained, and the USA Network (which in the past had aired first-run episodes of other “dead” series such as *Airwolf*, *Alfred Hitchcock Presents*, *The Ray Bradbury Theater* and *The Hitchhiker*) agreed to produce and air *Forever Knight* for a third year. The deal came about because the series had actually shown a 13 percent growth in its first year, especially among adult men and women, age 18-49. As Barry Thurston of Columbia Tri-Star explained of the deal with USA:

The series already has a fanatically loyal fan base, despite limited exposure from its primarily late night broadcast history. We believe this scheduling pattern [with USA] will raise the show’s profile, expand its audience base, and most important, drive viewers to both the cable and syndicated markets.<sup>2</sup>

So, after a round of cast changes which saw the departure of Kapelos as Nick’s partner, Schanke, *Forever Knight* did return for its third (and best) season. Unfortunately, USA pulled out of the deal, and the show did not survive to a fourth season. *Forever Knight* aired its last episode in May of 1996, even as the series reached an apex of quality. Although this series reteamed much of the behind-the-scenes personnel (in categories of music, direction, photography, and story) who had worked on

arguably lesser shows such as *Friday the 13th: The Series*, *Dracula: The Series*, and *Beyond Reality*, directors Allan Kroeker and Timothy Bond, musician Fred Mollins, director of photography Rodney Charters, and producers Larry LaLonde and Philip Bedard really proved with *Forever Knight* that practice makes perfect. By its closing hour, *Forever Knight* had become a first-rate, must-see drama. Geraint Wyn-Davies also proved to be a talented director by helming some of the series' finest installments, including the shocking finale "Last Knight."

Guest stars on *Forever Knight* are mostly unrecognizable unless one is either an aficionado of Canadian TV or someone who has watched *Dracula: The Series*, *Beyond Reality*, and *Friday the 13th: The Series* closely. Still, some genre notable did pop up occasionally, including Nikki de Boer (*Beyond Reality*, *Cube* [1998], *Star Trek: Deep Space Nine* [1993-99]), Peter Outerbridge (*Millennium*), Page Fletcher (*The Hitchhiker*), and Geordie Johnson (*Dracula: The Series*).

In the end, *Forever Knight* has become not only a cult classic, it has also been a stepping stone for many of its key participants. James Parriot returned to the American network scene with the NBC alien conspiracy series *Dark Skies* (1996-97), and Kroeker, Cassar, Charters, Bond, and others have become regular contributors to *Poltergeist: The Legacy* (1996-99). The 1996 Fox series *Kindred: The Embraced* also picked up where *Forever Knight* had left off, showing audiences the "underworld" of a secret vampire society.

On the Internet in 1999, *Forever Knight* fans are still devoted to seeing the return of their favorite series, and they have lobbied successfully for the release of *Forever Knight*-themed merchandise such as novels and CDs. Nigel Bennett has also penned a novel about a LaCroix-like master vampire.

## CRITICAL COMMENTARY

If an interested viewer were to sit down in front of all seventy episodes of *Forever Knight* and watch them in sequence, he or she might legitimately be amazed to witness firsthand just how this TV series grows and improves from episode to episode, season to season. The program begins in distinctly unmemorable fashion, but by the last episode it has reached a level of brilliance (for TV, anyway) that is most unexpected. Only infrequently does a series (and a horror series to boot!) show such a meteoric rise in writing, acting, and production quality. In fact, it is usually the other way around: shows get worse the longer they stay on the air, as creative staleness sets in like a cancer. *Forever Knight* should thus be lauded for poking and prodding at the limits of its format, ideas, and characters to the point where the show develops beyond the unpromising "superhero cop" mold which began it all.

At first, however, *Forever Knight* seems to be stuck in a quicksand pit of its own design. It continually employs cross-cutting between contemporary police investigations and Nick's long history, purportedly to contrast and compare the two times and situations. The cross-cutting nicely, and even artfully, establishes that for Nick, indeed for all of us, the past is forever linked to our present. It cannot be escaped or forgotten as time goes by. The flashbacks connect Nick's 800 years of experience to his current role as a cop, and tend to provide clues as to the identities, motivations, secrets, and so forth of current "suspects." It is rewarding that a cinematic technique such as cross-cutting is deployed for so powerful a thematic and didactic purpose on *Forever Knight*, but the overriding problem created by this technique is twofold. Firstly, the flashbacks (to the fall of Pompeii, the McCarthy Hearings, the Crusades, the rise of Nazi Germany, etc.) are inevitably almost *too* interesting. They are distracting in a sense, because they take away from the pace and suspense of the

“A” plot, the police procedural. Who wants to waste time on the death of a pornographer or a motel room tryst gone wrong when one can watch LaCroix attempt to turn Nick’s human sister, Fleur, into a vampire, or witness Nick’s long-past wedding night gone tragically wrong? This stuff is really great, and the cop stuff ... is not.

Perhaps more accurately, the police procedural aspects of *Forever Knight* are as dull and hackneyed as horror TV gets in the '90s. The very good, frequently riveting, flashbacks only serve to make the police stories, which are already weak, appear downright anemic. Crooked cops (“Outside the Lines”), the perp with diplomatic immunity (“Beyond the Law”), the serial killer on the loose (“For I Have Sinned”), the police shooting gone wrong (“Fatal Mistake”), are so familiar to viewers now that they have become clichés. This kind of deadpan, basic approach to police drama might have passed muster back in the 1970s, in the era of *Kolchak: The Night Stalker*, but *Hill Street Blues*, *NYPD Blue*, and even *Miami Vice* have forever changed the way television sees cops and dramatizes these police stories. The aforementioned series revolutionized the police procedural genre, and *Forever Knight* neither acknowledges nor adjusts to this revolution. Its cop aspects are therefore lackluster, and told without either style or flair.

The first season and at least half of the second season of *Forever Knight* tend to be weak, even boring, because of the unfortunate overreliance on crime stories, particularly homicides. Again, who wants to waste time with cops when there are vampires around, especially ones as endlessly fascinating as LaCroix and Janette? The cop show aspect of *Forever Knight* belied a laziness in the creative process early on, and story after story breaks ground in the exact same manner: the sexual/romantic tryst (which reveals some sexy skin and some smooching so as to tantalize audiences...) which then escalates into a bloody crime. This same scenario was the opening gambit of *Forever Knight* in “Bad Blood,” “Only the Lonely,” “Feeding the Beast,” “A Fate Worse Than Death,” “Beyond the Law,” and many, many others. Was there not some other way to begin a tale? Something a *little* more creative?

But then, just as this reviewer was preparing to dismiss *Forever Knight* as that worst of TV abominations, the hybrid (half-horror/half-cop show, like *Alien Nation* [1988], or half-sci-fi/half-*The Fugitive* like *Starman* [1986]) something surprising happened. The cop stories of *Forever Knight* became secondary as the relationships of the central characters grew in new and fascinating directions. Nick and Nat’s friendship and romantic relationship actually developed in a meaningful way, and LaCroix achieved near mythic status by evolving from two-dimensional villain and plot contrivance to a study in diverse perspectives and viewpoints. He was a monster to some, yes, but LaCroix was just acting according to his nature as a vampire. *Forever Knight* rightly asked this question of LaCroix: Why apply human standards to a nonhuman, and through LaCroix? That question was thoroughly explored. In an even more delightful turn, *Forever Knight* (in the latter half of the second season and all throughout the third) seemed to realize that its fan base was *horror* based, not cop based. Thus the series began to investigate horror notions without apology, and in rather gung ho fashion. Nick was possessed by the devil in “Sons of Belial,” affirming the existence of something worse than vampires in *Forever Knight*’s universe. In “Dead of Night,” the central characters explored a haunted house with real, rather than figurative, ghosts. In other stories, Jack the Ripper went on the attack as a kind of bizarre pseudo-vampire (“Bad Blood”) and LaCroix faced the ultimate terror: his thoroughly evil vampiric daughter Divia, in “Ashes to Ashes.” Each of these tales embraced the horror aspects of the series and even played with those concepts in clever ways.

The horror imagery in “Near Death” has thematic underpinnings beneath a good story. After flatlining

to determine if he, as a vampire, might still experience an afterlife, Nick finds himself (his spirit) alone, wandering in an endless desert. The desolate wasteland represented, in visual fashion, the emptiness of his eternal life, the boredom of an existence stretching out across time, forever into nothingness. The doorway he encountered, a portal to his ultimate destiny, represented Nick's fear of this unknown, his ambivalence about his own nature. Heaven or hell laid beyond, but Nick did not know which it would be, or if he had redeemed himself yet for all of his dark behavior. In these striking visual images, "Near Death" reached deep into the heart of Nick's character, and let the audience share in his diffidence.

An earlier story, "Dying for Fame," also visualized Nick's world in memorable terms. At one point, Knight experiences a nightmare set in a diner. Nick is learning to eat human food, such as french fries, but soon watery red blood replaces the ketchup on his meal. As he looks around, Nick sees the patrons in the diner sopping blood on their food like deranged animals. Even in his dreams, then, his addiction to blood is strong (and revolting to him). In moments like these, *Forever Knight* lived up to its potential as an excellent horror series. As far as imagery goes, there is nothing like a diner full of patrons sopping up bloody meals to turn one's stomach.

*Forever Knight* is also a program, like *Rod Serling's Night Gallery*, with a strong social conscience. Writers and producers took special care to make this show *about* something beyond vampire hijinks. "Last Act" and "Last Knight" cogently discuss suicide as an option for Nick, "Capital Offense" argues the double-edged issues of the death penalty, "Fallen Idol" discusses popular athletes and the merits of steroid use, "Jane Doe" tackles racism, "Avenging Angel" exposes the endless cycle of domestic abuse, "Sons of Belial" reveals the fanaticism of religious zealots, "The Games Vampires Play" looks at video game violence in our culture, a timely issue after the events at Columbine High School in Littleton, and "Fever" is an unabashed AIDS allegory as vampires suddenly fall ill from a virus contracted through the transmission of blood.

And so it went: "A More Permanent Hell" looked at the collapse of reason when humans believe they will have no future, "Spin Doctor" took a gander at witchhunts through the ages, and "False Witness" asked the highly relevant question: Is perjury ever permissible, ever justified? Some of these moral questions were handled more effectively than others, and much of *Forever Knight's* commentary tends to be a bit too on the nose. Specifically, the analogies between past and present are not always clever or artistic enough, and *Forever Knight* often borders on heavyhanded. Still, this concentration on issues and ideas rather than action, violence or gore is indicative of thought, introspection, and sincerity. *Forever Knight* has a great deal on its mind, which means that those involved with it were thinking, evolving, and building something interesting.

Still, *Forever Knight* would pretty much be a wash-out if not for one additional factor: a subtext which unifies the series and allows it to be viewed in a light beyond "cops and vampires." In this case, that subtext involves the addiction model. Nick Knight is essentially a weak man who wants to be strong, a person with what psychologists would call an addictive personality. Thus *Forever Knight* equates vampirism with alcoholism, or any other chemical and psychological addiction, and the viewer journeys with Nick as he attempts to overcome his particular (and peculiar) addiction: a thirst for blood and a need to kill to get it. In "The Games Vampires Play," Nick becomes addicted to a video game which allows him to kill again, and he realizes that this taste of what he once was is too enticing to experience even a little. It brings out the worst instincts in him, just like an innocent glass of wine might trigger a recovering alcoholic's need to drink.

In “The Fix,” Nick is depicted as nothing less than a junkie. He discovers that he enjoys the “rush” he feels from taking a new medicine which is supposed to be a cure for his vampirism. He even gets the munchies at one point, and in a desperate fit for his next fix breaks into Nat’s medicine cabinet to get his “meds.”

In “Feeding the Beast,” Nick enrolls in a 12-step recovery program (along with a sex addict named Monica and wronged woman named Hillary!), and reveals that he sees himself as irredeemable because of his addiction, his “weakness.”

Even in “Last Knight,” the final episode of the series, Nick is depicted as a low-functioning addict. He can’t control his hunger and he ends up overdosing on blood ... killing someone very important to him in the process. In “Faithful Followers,” Nick is apparently susceptible to illuminology, a cult which attempts to purge him of his guilt, another sign of a recovering addict—the quest to find meaning in one’s failures. Again, it is important to note that the difference between art and schlock is mainly one of layers and depth. Gore for gore’s sake, violence solely for titillation, horror meant only to entertain, is mere schlock. When a TV show or movie uses the language of horror (vampires, werewolves, even fluke men), analogies (vampirism equals alcoholism; or the past reveals our future) to reveal something to viewers about their life, then there is more going on, and the all-important “art” word can be bandied about. Dealing as it does with the unifying conceit of Nick as addict, *Forever Knight* earns the right to be considered artful.

This reviewer’s former mentor and film professor, a critic himself, once asserted that a reviewer is really desperate for material if he or she must describe the performances in a given production. His theory is that performances are just part of the director’s overall tapestry, and they need not be discussed separately, or given special attention unless egregiously bad, or terribly misguided. In this case however, the opposite is true. Some mention must go to the fact that Geraint Wyn-Davies is exceptionally good in *Forever Knight*. He is appealing as a man struggling with an addiction, and moral dilemmas to boot. Wyn-Davies is never afraid to reveal the ugly side of Nick to the audience, the weak, failed side of this interesting character. For that reason, Nick is much more than the “vampire cop superhero” he might have been had action/violence been highlighted on *Forever Knight* instead of ideas.

Nigel Bennett is also terrific as *Forever Knight*’s “bad father,” Lucien LaCroix. If most addicts come from bad households, then Nick came from the worst father imaginable: an egocentric, megalomaniacal vampire. *Forever Knight* gains additional points by being (over the course of many episodes) about the relationships between fathers and sons. In “Father’s Day,” it is revealed that LaCroix feels rejected by Nick. He is thus the disappointed father who cannot understand why his son does not appreciate the fact that he owes his existence to him. Nick, on the other hand, feels that his spiritual father, LaCroix, is unaccepting of the person Nick has chosen to be. So, in addition to its addiction model conceit, *Forever Knight* also manages to be, at times, a rather thoughtful essay on the relationship between fathers and sons.

*Forever Knight* strikes a chord with so many dedicated fans for a variety of reasons. In his imperfect, angst-ridden state, Nick is easy to sympathize with. Although he longs to be human, Nick is surely as human as any one of us: lost and trying to find his way in a world where he has made mistakes. LaCroix is a hypnotic villain who, despite his occasionally heartless ways, is also easy to empathize with because he is a rejected father and a lonely figure. The series also projects a thoughtful veneer thanks to its central conceit (vampirism as addiction), and there is even a tragic element in Nick and

Nat's romantic relationship. For all these reasons, *Forever Knight* does overcome its weak beginnings as a "vampire cop" show. If anything, *Forever Knight* proves that a well-done series about a vampire with a habit is habit-forming itself! *Angel* would do well to remember the lessons of this series.

## CAST AND CREDITS

*Cast:* Geraint Wyn-Davies (Nick Knight); Catherine Disher (Natalie Lambert); Nigel Bennett (Lucien LaCroix); **First Season:** Gary Farmer (Captain Stonetree); **First and Second Seasons:** John Kapelos (Detective Don Schanke); Deborah Duchene (Janette DuChamps); **Second Season:** Natsuko Ohama (Captain Amanda Cohen); **Third Season:** Ben Bass (Vachon); Blu Mankuma (Captain Joe Reese); Lisa Ryder (Detective Tracy Vetter).

*Credits:* Created by: James D. Parriott and Barney Cohen. *Producer:* Richard Borchiver. *Producer:* Richard Borchiver. *Supervising Producer:* Lionel E. Siegel. *Executive Producer:* James D. Parriott, Jon Slan. *Consulting Producers:* Phil Bedard, Larry LaLonde. *Production Supervisor:* Noella Nesdoly. *Associate Producer/Production Manager:* Nicholas J. Gray. *Director of Photography:* Bert Dunk. *Music Composed and Performed by:* Fred Mollin. *Executive Story Editors:* Peter Mitchell, Naomi Janzen. *Production Designer:* Bill Beeton. *Costume Designer:* Lynda Kemp. *Casting:* Clare Walker Casting. *Executive Consultant:* Barry Weitz, Roberta Becker Ziegel. *Postproduction Supervisor:* Tim Williams. *Editors (various episodes):* Dean Balse, Geoff Craigen, Stewart Dowds, Bill Goddard, David Goad, George Roulston, Robin Russell. *Stunts:* Rick Forsayeth, Alison Reid, John Stoneham Jr., Tye Tyokodi. *Stunt Coordinator:* Rick Forsayeth. *First Assistant Director:* Mac Bradden. *Second Assistant Director:* Bruce Speyer. *Art Director:* Jacques Bradette. *Script Supervisors:* Maddelena DiGregorio. *Makeup:* Lisa Brown. *Hair:* Moira Verwijk. *Wardrobe Mistresses:* Victoria Dobson, Michele Harney. *Camera Operator:* John Cassar. *First Assistant Camera:* Angelo Colavecchio. *Second Assistant Camera:* Mike Carella. *Sound Mixer:* Chaim Gillad. *Boom Operator:* Craig Baker. *Gaffer:* Bill Buttery. *Key Grip:* Chris Faulkner. *Best Boy:* D.R. Davidson. *Best Boy Grip:* Red Griffiths. *Gennie Operator:* Roger Bowden. *Set Decorator:* Joyce Liggett. *Property Master:* Robert Blair. *Lead Set Dresser:* Don McQueen. *Props Buyer:* Brent Kelly. *Art Department Coordinator:* Gustav Meunier. *Location Manager:* Michael Brownstone. *Production Auditor:* John Gaskin. *Production Coordinator:* Fran Solomon. *Transportation Coordinator:* Eric Beldowski. *Still Photographer:* Anthony Bliss. *Third Assistant Director:* Charmaine Gondy, Kristie Sills. *Assistant to Supervising Producer:* Angela M. Gardner. *Story Department Coordinator:* Katharine Gray. *Assistant Production Coordinator:* Carole Rosenberg. *Assistant to Production Executive:* Terry Styen. *Electrics:* Antony Ellis, Stephen Roberts. *Grips:* Johnny Wersta, Candide Franklyn. *Props Assistant:* Peter Clifford. *Set Department Driver:* Mike Forestell. *Assistant Dresser:* Pat Kelleher. *Wardrobe Assistant:* Michelle Mansfield. *Assistant Makeup:* Mary Sue Heron. *First Assistant Accountant:* Deborah Geaghan. *Office Assistant:* George House, Brad Berg. *Receptionist:* Janet Daley. *Casting Assistant:* Melanie Tanz. *Extras Casting:* J.W. Casting. *Driver captain:* Bent Rasmussen. *Drivers:* Gary Brown, Ilona Lisa Harris, John Mein, Steve Milo, Dennis Sincie, Trevor Smith. *Wardrobe Truck Driver:* Randy Chupa. *Honeywagon Operator:* Mike Keay. *Assistant Editor:* Charlotte Disher. *Special Effects:* Michael Kavanagh. *World Wide Marketing:* Margot Raport. *Construction Manager:* Lawrence Brandridge. *Head Carpenter:* Lloyd Bryan. *Scenic Artist:* Otto Fondan. *Eye Technician:* Karen Newman. *Assistant Location Managers:* Will Hoddinott, Glenn Carter. *Camera Trainee:* Johnny Colavecchia. *Mr. Wyn-Davies' Stand-in:* Bill Vibert. *Caterer:* Studio Catering. *Craft Services:* Starcraft Service, Inc. *Second Unit Director of Photography:* Jock Martin. *Second Unit Assistant Camera:* Stewart Aziz. *Second Unit First Assistant Director:* Randi Richmond. *Second Unit and*

*Assistant Director:* Christina Kaufman. *Second Unit Gaffer:* Marty Harrison. *Second Unit Grip:* Rick Fester. *Miniature Helicopter:* Steve Gray, Paul Mitchnick. *Re-recording Engineers:* Terry Gordica, James Porteous, Steve Foster. *Sound Effects Editor:* Kevin Howard. *Dialogue Editor:* Rob Hegedus. *Foley Artist:* John Sievert. *Video Post-Production Facilities Provided by:* Dome Productions. *Audio Post-Production Facilities Provided by:* Sounds Interchange. Paragon Entertainment Corporation, tele-munchen, Glen Warren Entertainment, produced in association with Tri Star Television, Columbia/Tri Star Television Distribution, A Sony Pictures Entertainment Company.

## EPISODE GUIDE

### • *First Season (1992–1993)*

**1. “Dark Knight” (Part I)** Written by James D. Parriott. Story by Barney Cohen and James D. Parriott; Directed by Allan Kroeker; airdate: May 5, 1992; *Guest Cast:* Christine Reeves (Elise Hunter); Nikki de Boer (Homeless Girl); George Buza, Zack Ward, Phil Jarrett, Helene Rouse, Jodi Pape, Roy Lewis, Peter Langley, Ray Peterson, Billy Buttery, Bryan Renfro, Quyen Hua, Lila Yee, Reg Dreger, Darren Andrew, Michael Gencher, Christopher Crumb.

Nicholas Knight, a vampire since 1228 turned Toronto cop, investigates a murder in a museum where a victim’s blood has been drained and the prized Jade Cup, a goblet used to drink blood in sacrifices, has been stolen as well. Nick and his new partner, the obnoxious Schanke, investigate even as Nick seeks a way to curb his own thirst for human blood with the help of medical examiner Natalie Lambert. An archaeologist at the museum finds an archival photograph of Nick from decades earlier, which reminds Knight of his long past as a creature of the night. The Jade Cup has been stolen by LaCroix, the master vampire who turned Nick undead, so as to prevent Nick from performing a ritual which may make him human again.

**2. “Dark Knight” (Part II)** Written by James D. Parriott; Story by Barney Cohen and James D. Parriott; Directed by Allan Kroeker; airdate: May 6, 1992; *Guest Cast:* Christine Reeves (Elise Hunter); Nikki de Boer (Homeless Girl); Graham McPherson, Jackie Richardson, Reg Dreger, Gene Mack, Helen Rouse.

Nick pursues LaCroix to a warehouse and learns that LaCroix is in possession of the stolen chalice. LaCroix reminds Nick of his past, and his own beginnings as an immortal vampire. At the same time, LaCroix reports that he is not the “Vampire Killer” plaguing the city, leaving Nick to explore other options. After surviving a run-in with daylight, and a few hours crammed in his car trunk, Nick finds himself on the trail of the killer, a man who is affiliated with the blood bank.

**3. “For I Have Sinned”** Written by Philip John Taylor; Directed by Gerard Ciccoritti; airdate: May 12, 1992; *Guest Cast:* Maria Del Mar (Magda); Michael McManus (Father Pierre Rushmore).

Two women are murdered in one week and Nick suspects a vampire perpetrator so he visits Janette’s night club in search of clues. A third murder occurs, with the victim found in a pose mimicking the crucifixion of Christ. Nick soon realizes he is on the trail of a crazed killer who is offing Catholics for their “sins.” Nick’s only hope of catching the psycho rests with a priest to whom the killer has confessed, and a Catholic woman who is working part-time as a phone-sex operator.

**4. “Last Act”** Written by Brad Wright; Directed by Rene Bonniere; airdate: May 19, 1992; *Guest*



*Cast:* Torri Higginson (Erica); Mackenzie Gray, Robert Bockstael, Laura Press, Allison Mang, Denise McLeod, Doris Petrie, Gillian Vanderburgh, Gema Zamprogna, J.R. Zimmerman, Elena Kudaba, Tony Meyler.

A vampire commits suicide by exposing herself to the sunlight and Nick mourns for her, an actress, playwright, and friend who once had a thirst and joy for life. At the same time, Nick and Schanke are brought in on a case in which a doctor, similarly enthusiastic about life, seems to have committed suicide. While Nick remembers the beautiful vampire, Erica, and their romantic past together, he also comes to the conclusion that the doctor's suicide was actually a disguised murder.

**5. "Dance by the Light of the Moon"** Written by Roy Sallows; Directed by Michael Levine; airdate: May 26, 1992; *Guest Cast:* Cyndy Preston (Ann Foley); Patrick McKenna, Michael Killinger, Murray Oliver, Betty Lou Buckindale, Julie Crossen, Lauren Griffeth, Marina-Rae Nicholas, Susan Ramr, Marie Siebert.

A double murder leads Nick and Schanke in search of a mysterious woman who may have played a part in the slayings. The trail leads to a strip club called Jilly's and some information on one of the dead men, a good cop who went bad. Nick interrogates a stripper named Ann Foley who seems to be a bit of a manipulator, perhaps the very murderer Nick seeks. Making matters worse, Nick grows attracted to Ann, a former corporate lawyer who has a dark side and may know a thing or two about embezzling.

**6. "Dying to Know You"** Written by Tony Sheer; Directed by Brad Turner; airdate: June 9, 1992; *Guest Cast:* Elizabeth Marmur (Denise Ford); Brett Halsey (Conrad Hedges); Pia Southam, Victor A. Young, Richard McMillan, Catherine Swing, Markus Parilo, Chandra West, Richard Gira, Christine Reeves, Christina Cox, Helen Rousse.

A prominent citizen's family is kidnapped and Captain Stonetree recruits a beautiful psychic to help Nick and Schanke solve the crime. The psychic, Denise, proves to be a bit too successful as she starts to suspect Nick's long and tortured history as a creature of the night. The kidnappers soon make a financial demand of Mr. Hedges, a humanitarian who runs the Human Touch Company, but Denise suspects that Hedges is no saint and that he, in fact, might be behind his own family's kidnapping.

**7. "False Witness"** Written by Naomi Janzen; Directed by Jorge Montesi; airdate: August 4, 1992; *Guest Cast:* John Evans (Murray Kozak); Ellen Dubin (Mistress Tamara); Martin Doyle, Kelly Fiddick, Monique Mojica, Dean Gabourie, Garth Dyke, Rosemary Lawless, Robert Russell, Alexa Gilmour, Robert Thomas, Richard Partington, Lili Francks, Joanna Hartley.

Nick and Schanke set up a sting to nab the perp they suspect killed a porno queen. Nick's snitch is murdered in the process, causing Nick to feel guilty about his methods. To hide his vampire skills, Nick gives false testimony about what he witnessed at the time of his snitch's death. Nick's moral dilemma spurs a memory from the past involving a falsely accused man whose musician companion was murdered by a vampire.

**8. "Cherry Blossoms"** Written by Roy Sallows; Directed by Brad Turner; airdate: August 11, 1992; *Guest Cast:* James Hong (Dr. Chun); Ho Chow, Shirley Cui, Oscar Hsu, Janet Lo, Daniel Lee.

Stonetree assigns Nick and Schanke to learn who ordered a hit on three illegal Chinese immigrants in

Chinatown. The search is not just for the killer, however, but for a woman who went missing before she could testify against a major Chinese crime family. Nick learns that an old man at an acupuncture shop is harboring the wounded girl, a fact which revives another memory for Nick. Worse, his bloody past is still alive for Chun, who lost his mother to LaCroix's lust for death.

**9. "I Will Repay"** Written by Brad Wright; Directed by Jorge Montesi; airdate: September 15, 1992; *Guest Cast:* Lindsay Merrithew (Richard); Shelley Young, Louise Cranfield, Nancy Cser, Dean Gabourie, Ashley Brown, Jorge Montesi, Felix Gray, William Fisher, Denise McLeod, John LeFebvre, Larry McLean, John Stoneham Sr.

Natalie's brother, Richard, is shot at the 27th Precinct when a criminal breaks free, grabs a gun, and goes on a shooting spree. With Richard's life ebbing, Natalie begs Nick to turn him into a vampire so that he can survive his wounds and go on living a life of good. Nick is conflicted about such an action because he remembers an occasion when he gave a dying leper eternal life with less-than-happy consequences. Nick overcomes his objections and decides to save Richard ... but with immortal life comes great responsibilities, and the need for great restraint.

**10. "Dead Air"** Written by Alison Bingeman; Directed by Steve DiMarco; airdate: September 22, 1992; *Guest Cast:* Diane Cary (Dr. Christina Noble); David Hewlett (Matthew Reed); Jonathan Wise (Ted); Reiner Schwarz, Barbara Barsky, Tannis Burnett, Justine Campbell, Dan Paullick, Megan Smith, Steve Whistance Smith.

A serial killer calls in to a radio talk show as he is strangling his latest victim. Stonetree assigns Nick to the case when the host, Dr. Christina Noble, goes to the police. The next night, the killer calls in again with another victim, but Nick is too late to save her. One of Noble's former patients, a man who murdered his own mother, is on the loose and plans to make Noble his next victim.

**11. "Hunters"** Written by Peter Mitchell; Directed by Michael Levine; airdate: September 29, 1992; *Guest Cast:* Daniel Kash, William Colgate, Rachel Luttrell, Bill MacDonald, Robert Hollinger, Araby Lockhart, Debra Winter, Nicu Brahzea.

Schanke's former partner, Jimmy, is gunned down on the street, and Schanke swears vengeance. Nick and Schanke look into Jimmy's case load, determining who may have wanted him dead. The case takes a surprising turn when the killer sends Schanke a photograph indicating he is the next target. After a bomb nearly kills Schanke, Nick has him hide out at the Raven till things quiet down ... but Schanke himself is itching to find out who wants him dead.

**12. "Dead Issue"** Written by Lionel E. Siegel; Directed by Mitch Gabourie and Nicholas J. Gray; airdate: October 6, 1992; *Guest Cast:* Lori Jallier (Lynn Fiore); Marc Strange, Louise Di Bianco, Tony De Santis, David Ferry, Adam Brambe, Natalie Radford, Owen Young, Claire Cellucci, George Kapelos, Bernard Browne, Susan Potvin.

A friend of the captain's is involved in the murder of a porno star and white slaver. Though the killing is quickly ruled self-defense, Nick suspects there is more going on. Nick uncovers a marriage where one partner's perverse appetites have led to a web of lies, and a shooting. Over the captain's objection, Nick presses on with the case, even though he has been warned that it is a "dead issue."

**13. "Father Figure"** Written by Michael Sadowski; Directed by Gary Farmer; airdate: October 13,

1992; *Guest Cast*: Chantallese Kent (Lisa Cooper); Illya Woloshyn, Alan Aarons, Marvin Ishmael, Jocelyne Saint-Denis, Marion Brand, Robert Godin, Jean Stawarz, Randy Butcher.

A homeless girl witnesses a gangland hit in a dark alley, and Nick is reminded of another waif, a child named Daniel whom he knew in London during World War II. Because of her domestic situation, young Lisa Cooper is entrusted to Nick's custody till her father returns from out of the country. Unfortunately, the thugs who committed the murder in the street are aware that Nick has a new ward staying at his apartment, and they will stop at nothing to silence her. Meanwhile, Nat believes that Nick's metabolism is changing towards human because his amazing healing powers are diminishing, and he even feels pain.

**14. "Spin Doctor"** Written by Michael Sadowski; Directed by Leon Marr; airdate: October 27, 1992; *Guest Cast*: Lisa Howard (Laura Neal); Dixie Seatle (Judge Barbara Norton); Barry Flatman (Hyatt); Christa Daniel, Brenda Kamino, Sandi Ross (Grace); Scott Walker, Robert Morelli, Michael Reynolds, Chantal Craig, Deborah Lobban, Anita LaSelva, Timothy MacDonald, Ron Bullied, Patrick McKenna.

A reporter covering the mayoral election is electrocuted in his bath tub. Nick tries to find the murderer while Schanke and Natalie argue about which candidate would be better for the city. The further Nick looks into the tale, the more he is reminded of his own tragic involvement in a political scandal of another era, the 1950s HUAC investigation. As Nick grows closer to the truth, he uncovers a new sex scandal in the unlikeliest place.

**15. "Dying for Fame"** Written by Shelly Goldstein; Directed by John Cassar; airdate: November 10, 1992; *Guest Cast*: Tracey Cook (Rebecca); Richard Eden (Marty); Nahanni Johnstone, Chandra Galasso, Dani Elwell, Hal Eisen, Madhuri Batra, Gerry Mendicino, Elizabeth Harper, Theo Brand, Mitra Lovett, Carolyn Stewart, Tara Charendoff, Jeremy Harris, Judy Sinclair, Alan Feiman, Kevin Rushton, Jonathan Hartman.

A groupie for a tawdry but popular rock star, Rebecca, dies in her bed after having sex. Meanwhile, Nick falls off the wagon and starts drinking blood again. Rebecca, a self-hating star who considers herself a prisoner of fame, claims that she is innocent of murder, and Nick believes her. A fan who feels slighted by Rebecca's recent hit song (about killing her fans) plots to kill the rock star while she is on stage.

**16. "Only the Lonely"** Written by Susan Martin; Directed by Michael Levine; airdate: November 17, 1992; *Guest Cast*: Barclay Hope (Roger Jameson); Sandi Ross (Grace); Karen Racicot, Nancy McClure, Don DeLabbio, Nick Johne, Scott Walker, Kent Sheridan.

The city has been gripped by a series of sexual assaults and murders, and the first clue involves "Singular Interests," a dating service where the victims were enrolled. At the same time, Nat turns thirty and contemplates the loneliness of her life. At the grocery store, she bumps into Roger Jameson, a stranger who seems interested in her. Nick is also wondering about his relationship with Nat, and he recalls their first meeting ... at the morgue of all places, even as Nat finds herself in danger.

**17. "Unreality TV"** Written by Michael Sadowski; Directed by Clay Borris; airdate: November 24, 1992; *Guest Cast*: Laura Robinson (Tawny Teller); Jason Blicher, Greg Spottiswood, Daniel MacIvar, Rodger Barton, Julie Wildman.

Nick and Schanke have the “honor” of allowing two TV reporters from a popular “reality oriented” cop show work with them for a night. Predictably, the night goes badly: a murder, a sniper, and a perpetrator’s escape all prove to be more bread and circuses for an upcoming installment of the highly-rated *Cop Watch*. While Nick remembers an incident from his past in which Vampire Enforcers killed off humans so as to protect their secret society, he must also deal with the fact that the reporters may have lensed footage of him in “undead” mode.

**18. “Feeding the Beast”** Written by Alison Bingeman; Directed by Richard Lewis; airdate: December 1, 1992; *Guest Cast*: Carrie-Ann Moss (Monica Howard); Marina Anderson, Hadley Obodiac, Diego Chambers, Peter Messaline, Julie Armstrong, Louise Wrightman, Ian Deakin, Christine Reeves, Helen Rouse.

A recovering alcoholic is shot dead in his car, and then burned to death. Nick goes undercover in a 12-step program to determine who among the addicted personalities is capable of murder. This seems especially appropriate because Nick is attempting to overcome his addiction to human blood, and failing. When another addict dies, Nick suspects Monica, the sponsor and romantic partner of all the victims.

**19. “If Looks Could Kill”** Written by Naomi Janzen; Directed by Michael Levine; airdate: February 9, 1993; *Guest Cast*: Jennifer Dale (Dr. Sophia Jergen); Terri Hawkes (Bernice); Allison Hossack, Kymberley Huffman, Sharolyn Sparrow, Mark Kehr, Bill Vibert, Gwen Park, David Spooner, Debra Winter, Shanya Vaughan, Denis Delory, Chuck Roe, Desmond Campbell, Louise Taylor.

A beautiful woman goes crazy at the makeup counter of a department store and shoots a sales lady before dying herself. Another woman goes crazy at an exercise spa, injuring a personal trainer, and Nick fears that some kind of crazy epidemic associated with fitness and beauty is affecting the city. Then Natalie notes something odd about the corpse of the first shooter: she is no longer a beautiful twenty-seven-year-old, but an old woman whose beauty has long-faded. It seems that a mysterious doctor, a woman Nick once knew, is using extracts of vampire blood to keep human women young and beautiful.

**20. “Fatal Mistake”** Written by Michael Sadowski; Directed by Don McCutcheon; airdate: February 16, 1993; *Guest Cast*: Cynthia Belliveau (Alexandra); David Stratton, Conrad Coates, Sandi Ross (Grace); Linda Goranson, Ken James, Simon Reynolds, Tony Perri, Jeff Ward.

The captain shoots a young robber when he walks in on a convenience store stick-up, and later feels guilty for killing the 17 year old. The case is complicated for Captain Stonetree because the boy he shot was not found to have a gun ... which calls his judgment as a cop into question. Meanwhile, Nick spots a beautiful blond woman from his past, a woman named Alexandra whom he wronged a long time ago. While Stonetree ventures out into the night to catch the dead boy’s accomplice and clear his name, Nick is confronted by Alexandra, who is living a life of eternal damnation as a vengeful vampire thanks to Nick and LaCroix.

**21. “1966”** Written by Brad Wright; Directed by Nicholas J. Gray; airdate: February 23, 1993; *Guest Cast*: Cali Timmons (Lily); George Touliatos (Doppler); Christopher Kennedy, Michael Rhoades, Don Carrier, David Spooner, Geoffrey Towers, Joseph Cheung, Beverly Cheung, Henri Li, Ann Chiu.

A deranged criminal holds up the precinct house and takes Natalie hostage. As Nick faces down this

threat, he recalls a similar incident in Berlin in 1966 when he was searching for a sacred text written in Sanskrit, a text called the Abaret which was believed to enunciate cures for vampirism and other curses. LaCroix was also there in West Germany, working against Nick's attempt to help a trio of resisters and free his soul. There's no more time for memories, however, when the criminal shoots Captain Stonetree and then reveals a hand grenade.

**22. "Love You to Death"** written by Naomi Janzen; Story by Tony Sheer; Directed by Michael Levine; airdate: March 2, 1993; *Guest Cast:* Andrea Roth (Lucy Preston); Jonathan Potts, Sandi Ross (Grace); Michael Millar, Mary Paterson, Paul Ehrmann, Jeannie Daniels, Govan Kale, Sherry Schell.

A model who has been missing for four months turns up dead on a park bench, posed as if in a lingerie catalog spread. Natalie determines that the model suffocated after a long imprisonment in what seems like a gilded cage (replete with caviar and wine), while Nick meets another model, Lucy Preston, who resembles an angelic ballerina he once knew. Soon, Lucy is kidnapped and trapped in a beautifully decorated apartment with bars and bricks on all sides. Now Nick must save Lucy from a man who wants to keep her "pure," even as he recalls his own fateful encounter with a personal fantasy ... an event which turned Nick away from killing humans permanently.

• *Second Season (1994–1995)*

*Note:* In the second and third seasons, *Forever Knight* began to list character names at the end of each episode, making it far easier to determine which actor had essayed which role.

**23. "Killer Instinct"** Written by Naomi Janzen; Directed by Michael Levine; airdate: September 17, 1994; *Guest Cast:* Michael Carvana (Jeff Morris); Sandi Ross (Grace); Michael Simpson (Rogers); Jonathan Whittaker (Dreyfus); Tony Meyler (Constable Wilkinson); Christopher Marren (Officer #1); Angela Moore (Officer #2); David Blacker (Officer #3); Norm Spencer (Man); Stavroula Logothettis (Woman); Jack Nichol森 (Junkie); Angela Asher (Prostitute); Rick Forsayeth (Stunt Double Nick); Ron Van Hart (Stunt Driver).

LaCroix is back, undead, and on the prowl, and people are being murdered all over town. Meanwhile, Schanke is kissing up to his new precinct captain, Amanda Cohen, and Nick believes that a vampire is responsible for the brutal murders. When Internal Affairs gets involved, Nick is arrested as the killer, set-up by a puppet-master behind the scenes. When blood is found in the refrigerator during a search of Nick's apartment, it seems the final nail has been hammered into Knight's coffin.

**24. "A Fate Worse Than Death"** Written by Gillian Horvath; Directed by Don McCutcheon; airdate: September 24, 1994; *Guest Cast:* Natalie Radford (Celeste); Kevin Jubinville (Mason); Ross Petty (Draper); Phillip Williams (Artie Goodwin); Earl Pastko (Miklos); Christian Laurin (Daviau); Gloria Slade (Anna); David Danzon (French Soldier); Jean-Marc Amyot (French Beadle); Andrea Menzies (Julie); Alexa Gilmour (Louise).

A hooker is discovered dead in a hotel room with a john who professes innocence of the crime. In the hooker's possession is a card for the Raven, Janette's club, so Nick questions his vampire friend. Janette indicates that a pimp named Mason has been roughing up his women. When Mason is found dead, Janette is the prime suspect because of her sympathy for the plight of women enslaved by men.

**25. "Stranger Than Fiction"** Written by Phil Bedard and Larry Lalonde; Directed by Clay Borris;

airdate: October 1, 1994; *Guest Cast*: Larissa Lapchinski (Emily Weiss).

LaCroix pays a visit to Emily Weiss, a quiet woman and best-selling author of an uncannily true-to-life vampire saga called "The Denied." When Weiss is attacked by a person who seems to be vampire, Captain Cohen assigns Schanke and Nick to protect her, though Janette warns Knight that any number of vampires wish her dead because her work is so accurate. When another attempt is made on Weiss's life, Nick moves her from a safehouse to his apartment, and asks Janette to protect her there. Nick starts to develop feelings for the author, even though LaCroix insists she must die.

**26. "Forward into the Past"** Written by Michael Levine and John Scheinfeld; Directed by Don McCutcheon; airdate: October 8, 1994; *Guest Cast*: Stephanie Morgenstern (Youth Katherine Barrington); Matt Cooke (Older Jeremy Stanton); Corinne Conley (Old Katherine Barrington); Donald Davis (Young Jeremy Stanton); R.D. Reid (Aristotle); Carolyn Hay (Ava); John Friesen (Detective Norton); Paul O'Sullivan (Paul Blondell); Vernon Chapman (George); Venetia Marie Young (Madelyn Pinchot); Fran Elliott (Older Madelyn Pinchot); Rick Forsayeth (Nick Stunt Double).

A woman is found tortured to death in a warehouse, and Nick recalls knowing her in the 1950s when she was the confidante of another friend, the wealthy but sweet-hearted Katherine Barrington. Nick remembers the events surrounding the murder of Katherine's husband, and how a wealthy businessman named Jeremy Stanton wanted her out of the way too so he could control the Barrington family business. Now, some forty years later, Stanton has killed Katherine's friend and is still looking for Katherine, who Nick helped to go into hiding a long time ago.

**27. "Hunted"** Written by Roy Sallows; Directed by Allan Kroeker; airdate: October 15, 1994; *Guest Cast*: Gwynyth Walsh (The Hunter); Robert Collins (The Biker); Brian Tree (Walter Trethewey); Nicky Gaudagni (Elizabeth Trethewey); David Bedard (Yates); Rick Forsayeth (Nick Stunt Double).

Six people have been found shot to death in one month, and stopwatches were found at all of the crime scenes. When Natalie comments that this killer is playing some kind of game, Nick remembers a vicious thrill sport that he, LaCroix, and Janette enjoyed hundreds of years earlier. Eyewitness accounts of the case in the present indicate that the killer is a psychopath, a fact confirmed when the hunter captures Schanke and hunts Nick down, aware that he is the greatest of quarry: a vampire. The hunter is soon revealed to be a beautiful woman.

**28. "Faithful Followers"** Written by Naomi Janzen; Directed by Jon Cassar; airdate: October 22, 1994; *Guest Cast*: Karl Pruner (Matthew); Linda Prystawski (Holly); Robert Bockstael (Thomas the Vampire); Jody Racicot (David Barton); Gerry Mendicino (Councillor Cardelli); Paul Wildbaum (Tattoo Artist); Susan Bryson (Egyptian Servant Girl); John Stoneham Jr. (Vincent Cardelli); Christine Reeves (Alyce Hunter); Helen Rouse (13th Century Mile); Christina Cox (Joan of Arc); Cynthia Belliveau (Alexandra); Andrea Roth (Lucy/Sylvaine); Rick Forsayeth (Nick Stunt Double).

Nick has gone deep undercover to investigate a cult movement called Illuminology which may condone criminal activities including murder. When Nick goes incommunicado unexpectedly, Natalie worries that he has become vulnerable to the cult's message of healing and hope. She is not far from the mark, and Nick seems to be under the sway of the cult leader's powers of persuasion. Natalie learns that the leader, Matthew, is using dangerous psychotropic drugs to control his flock, and that Nick has already started to give away his personal wealth to the guru of Immunology.

**29. “Father’s Day”** Written by Gillian Horvath; Directed by Bruce Pittman; airdate: October 29, 1994; *Guest Cast:* Peter Boretski (Don Thomas Constantine); Peter Outerbridge (Young Thomas Constantine); Maurice Godin (David Constantine); Nicole Oliver (Karen Constantine); Vito Rezza (Johnny Larnar); Robert Latimer (Customs Officer); Tony Craig (Sgt. Carter); Matt Birman (Carey); Randy Butcher (Jim); Rick Forsayeth (Nick Stunt Double); Steve Lucescu (David Stunt Double).

Nick covers for Schanke on Father’s Day so he can be with his family. Meanwhile, the Constantine crime family is in an uproar over the defection of the don’s grandson, who is next in line to take over “the business.” When Schanke’s contact is killed before delivering the young heir to safety, it is clear that every mob soldier on the street is out to kill him. Complicating matters for Nick is the fact that the don, as a young man, brought him safely to the New World.

**30. “Undue Process”** Written by Michael Sadowski; Directed by Allan Kroeker; airdate: November 5, 1994; *Guest Cast:* Lynne Thomson (Dr. Emma Reston); Allan Royal (Ronald Gault); Theresa Tova (Ms. Sheppard); J.R. Zimmerman (Prison Guard); Simon Richards (Boss); Keith Kemps (Hobbs); Karen Kenedy (Woman #1); Angela Gei (Woman #2); Marianne Moroney (Vivian); Tracy Hway (Police Woman); Lloyd Adams (Young Man); Rick Forsayeth (Nick Stunt Double); Ed Queffelec (Gault Stunt Double).

Natalie’s young goddaughter is murdered by a serial killer named Ronald Gault, and Nat is infuriated when she is removed from the case and replaced by another M.E., Dr. Emma Reston. Vigilantes are after Gault too, and soon a mob mentality has taken over the city. When Gault is apprehended, the system fails to gather enough evidence to hold him in jail, and Nat, Schanke, and Dr. Reston each consider the option of taking the law into their own hands to mete out justice. When Gault dies of a heart attack in Schanke and Nick’s care, accusations really begin to fly, especially with Gault’s aggressive lawyer on the scene.

**31. “Bad Blood”** Written by James Johnston; Directed by Allan Kroeker; airdate: November 12, 1994; *Guest Cast:* Cedric Smith (Inspector Liam O’Neal); Kimberly Huie (Bridget Hellman); Sandi Ross (Grace Balthazar); Earl Pastko (Miklos); John Swindells (Father Hurley); Todd William Schroeder (Karl); Krista Bridges (Sharon); Ken Ketter (Barber/The Ripper); Theodora Farray (Raven Waitress); Cliff Saunders (Irish Man); John E. Campbell (Young O’Neal Boy); Lesley Kelly (Police Woman); Bryan Renfro (Jogger).

After a passionate evening with a beautiful woman, a professional football player is brutally murdered in a vicious nocturnal attack. An inspector from Dublin arrives to investigate with Nick, believing the case to be related to a series of murders in Dublin in 1979, in Iceland in 1983, and in Maine in 1987. Nick grows agitated because each succeeding strike by the killer looks more and more like the work of a rogue vampire ... and the inspector seems to suspect Nick’s real identity. Janette informs Nick that the killer is none other than that seemingly immortal mass murderer, Jack the Ripper.

**32. “Can’t Run, Can’t Hide”** Written by Ron Taylor; Directed by Jon Cassar; airdate: November 19, 1994; *Guest Cast:* Clark Johnson (Casey Brooks/Lieutenant Travis Drake); Von Flores (Tran); Richard McMillan (Abraham Lindley); Gordon Michael Woolvet (Kyle the Grocery Boy); Gabriel Hogan (Young Soldier); Bernadette Li (Vietnamese Mother); Richard Campbell (Damon); Nicole Greenspan (Beverly); Kimberlyn Ungshang (Asian Child); William Corno (Vampire); Lloyd Adams (Casey Stunt Double); Marco Bianco (Tran Stunt Double); Jemy Wing (Asian Stunt Woman); Ho Chow (Asian Stunt Man #1); Phil Chiu (Asian Stunt Man #2).

A paranoid gunowner is stabbed to death inside his seemingly impenetrable security compound. Nick finds some Asian graffiti inside the home and recalls a brutal experience in Vietnam that seems pertinent: the massacre of an entire village. In the present, the case takes Nick and Schanke to Casey Brooks, a Vietnam veteran and parole officer who served with the dead man. Brooks' men are being murdered systematically, but he claims he is not the killer ... that someone else, a vampire perhaps, is pursuing "justice" for the innocent dead in Vietnam.

**33. "Capital Offense"** Written by Michael Sadowski; Directed by Timothy Bond; airdate: November 26, 1994; *Guest Cast:* Lisa Langlois (Laura Garfield/Sister Marise); Robert King (Danny Carruthers); Lenore Zann (Amber); Rebecca Bell (Sgt. Lillian); Lisa Lebel (Mother Superior); Victor Erdos (Car Rental Clerk); Rick Forsayeth (Nick Stunt Double); C.J. Fidler (Stunt Woman); Larry McLean (Stunt Driver).

A Texas woman made infamous by the American media for the murder of her husband escapes from death row and flees to Toronto. She is captured and interrogated by Nick and Schanke, but she maintains her innocence and that a man named Carruthers actually offed her unfortunate spouse. With U.S. marshals on the way, Nick has only twenty-four hours to prove that Laura Garfield, the Terror of Texas, does not deserve to be executed. When there is another victim found axed in Toronto and Natalie cannot establish a time of death, Laura is facing new charges and Nick finds himself uncertain whom he should trust.

**34. "Amateur Night"** Written by John Scheinfeld and Michael Levine; Directed by Donald McCutcheon; airdate: January 21, 1995; *Guest Cast:* Laurie Paton (Alix Logan); Wayne Best (Director); Richard Chevolleau (High Tech Sneakers); Andy Marshall (Keys); Shaun Austin-Olsen (Police Captain); Dennis O'Connor (Czajkowski); Arthur Eng (G-Roc); Ian Alden (Drug Dealer); Michelyn Emelle (Shanice's Mother); Rick Forsayeth (Nick Stunt Double); Jamie Jones (Nick Stunt Double); Anton Tyukodi (Schanke Stunt Double); Shelly Cook (Alix Stunt Double); Ed Queffelec (Stunt Bus Boy).

An innocent child gets gunned down in a drive-by shooting, and Natalie is deeply disturbed by the murder and its implications for society. Meanwhile, Schanke consults on a police action movie and has problems with the blatant inaccuracies he witnesses on the set. Schanke and movie star Alix Logan join Nick on his case as he attempts to track down the gang responsible for the shooting of the little girl. The coddled, but beautiful, movie star gets more than she bargained for when Nick and Schanke's tête-à-tête with an Asian gang turns into a violent shoot-out and a fast-paced car chase.

**35. "Beyond the Law"** Written by James Johnston; Directed by Michael Levine; airdate: January 28, 1995; *Guest Cast:* David Calderisi (Ambassador Oleg Petrashenko); Naomi Jenkins (Juri Karimov/Demir Petrashenko); Debora Theaker (Daphne Malloch); Pierre Lenoir (Jacques Tremblay); Lisa Ryder (Angela Mosler); Stewart Arnott (Senator Tom Gardner); Gail Travers (Tamara Brunansky); Judy Sinclair (Mrs. Javitz); Kate Greenhouse (Paula Kierns); Katie Griffin (Jill); Rick Forsayeth (Nick Stunt Double); Brian Thomas (Stunt Guard #1); John Stead (Stunt Guard #2).

A bank teller is killed in her home and her body is dumped elsewhere to cloak the crime. While Nick tracks down a stretch limo which reportedly left the scene, Schanke must deal with a flirtatious forensics expert who harbors a fondness for married men. The culprit in the murder case appears to be an ambassador with diplomatic immunity, which makes him untouchable. The situation spurs Nick's memory of how in the 1960s another government official also abused his power.



**36. “The Fix”** Written by Michael Sadowski; Directed by Nicholas J. Gray; airdate: February 4, 1995; *Guest Cast:* David Eisner (Fred Berman); Howard Jerome (Jimmy Vinetti); Ian D. Clark (Dr. Spense); Paul Sanders (Brian Sykes); Anne Marie Scheffler (Hot Dog Vender); Kim Scharne (Pretty Girl); Eric Bryson (Vince); Rick Forsayeth (Nick Stunt Double); Anton Tyukodi (Berman Stunt Double); Mic Jones (Stunt Hitman).

A detective friend of Schanke’s commits suicide on a sunny morning, and Internal Affairs insists he was a crooked cop working with the mob. Meanwhile, Natalie believes she has found a scientific cure for vampirism which will allow Nick to exist in sunlight. The experimental treatment returns Nick to the land of the living, but also saddles him with a kind of junkie’s “adrenaline” fix. Nick is left to wonder: Has he been cured, or has he just exchanged one addiction for another?

**37. “Be My Valentine”** Written by Diane Cary; Directed by Stefan Scaini; airdate: February 11, 1995; *Guest Cast:* Claire Rankin (Fleur); Marvin Karon (Stan); Nonnie Griffin (Nick’s Mother); Natalie Gray (Terry); Patricia Carroll Brown (Elsa); David Sutcliffe (Fiancée); Shelly Hong (Coed); Rick Forsayeth (Nick Stunt Double); Peer Szkoda (LaCroix Stunt Double); Anton Tyukodi (Schanke Stunt Double).

A woman returning home from work receives a valentine from an unknown admirer and then is attacked in her apartment by an assailant. Since the incident has happened just two days before Valentine’s Day, Nick has cause to remember a time when he, Janette, and LaCroix visited Nick’s home and LaCroix fell in love with his innocent young sister, Fleur. In the present, Nick and Natalie share their first romantic kiss just as a second “Valentine’s Day” murder occurs. Nick and Schanke track down the killer, but while they are involved in that enterprise, LaCroix keeps a promise to rob Nick of Natalie’s love just as Nick robbed him of Fleur’s love so long ago.

**38. “The Fire Inside”** Written by Marc Scott Zicree; Directed by Allan Kroeker; airdate: February 18, 1995; *Guest Cast:* Derek Aasland (Danny); Tyrone Benskin (Jonah); John Bourgeois (Jake); Todd Stewart (Tom Phillips); Glenn Bang (Dr. Zang); Tracey Hway (Angie Pappas); Thoywell Hemmings (Fountain); Ira Glasner (Billy); Serena Pruyne (Beverly); Allyson McMackon (Margaret Phillips); Randy Butcher (Dragon); Geordie Johnson (Voice of Dragon).

A masked psycho with a flame thrower is on the loose, torching homeless people in an effort to clean up “the trash.” Nick and Schanke are soon on the case, and they realize that the killer is hiding below the city, inside its industrial infrastructure: a maze of pipes, tunnels, and ventilation shafts. Exploring the dark tunnels and sewers for their prey, Nick and Schanke each relive moments from their pasts, including Schanke’s revelation that his father was a sewer worker. The vicious torchings continue, with homeless underdwellers being burned to death ... and even Nick is rattled as he realizes he could be killed should he find himself before the killer’s deadly weapon.

**39. “Blood Money”** Written by Jason Brett; Directed by Geraint Wyn-Davies; airdate: February 25, 1995; *Guest Cast:* Gordon Currie (Sean DeChamps); Andrew Gillies (Feliks Twist); Bernard Behrens (Charles DuChamps); Gary Robbins (Doorman); Ellen Ray Hennessey (Jenkins); Robert Thomas (Henchman #1); Ron Van Hart (Henchman #2); Rick Forsayeth (Nick Stunt Double); Anton Tyukodi (Schanke Stunt Double); Jamie Jones (Sean Stunt Double).

Schanke and Nick investigate a car bombing in which a wealthy business accountant, Charles DuChamps, is killed. Charles leaves behind a son, a hard-drinking, drug-addicted, womanizing kid

who has squandered a lot of money on the stock market. Schanke thinks the son arranged his own father's death, but Nick is not sure that is the case. When Nick's personal savings account at DuChamps, more than \$470 million, is suddenly cleaned out, Nick has cause to reconsider his defense of the young man.

**40. "Partners of the Month"** Written by Shelly Goldstein; Directed by Alan Simmonds; airdate: April 22, 1995; *Guest Cast:* Deborah Rennard (Julia Winwood); Victoria Adilman (Victoria Levy); Stewart Rick (James Coulter); Raymond O'Neill (Paul Levy); Nigel Williams (Harry); Rick Forsayeth (Nick Stunt Double).

A wealthy and ruthless workaholic dies—But was his death a suicide or did his lonely, beautiful wife kill him? While Nick and Schanke ponder this question, Schanke yearns to win the "partners of the month" plaque, splits with Myra, faces a mid-life crisis, and moves into Nick's apartment. Meanwhile, Natalie examines the workaholic's corpse and discovers he was murdered, while Nick and Schanke dig up the fact that the dead man was having an affair with his personal assistant.

**41. "Queen of Harps"** Written by Gillian Horvath; Directed by Alan Simmonds; airdate: April 29, 1995; *Guest Cast:* Brenda Bazinet (Gwyneth/Johanna Shea); Peter Donaldson (Sir Raymond/Hugh De La Barre); Ron Hartmann (Ted Haley); David Bolt (Sam Baskers); Colin Miller (Concierge); Rick Forsayeth (Nick Stunt Double); Shelley Cook (Gwyneth/Johanna Stunt Double); Anton Tyukodi (Sir Raymond/Hugh Stunt Double).

Nick bids \$300,000 on a beautiful harp from his past which he considers meaningful. He recalls how he heard the music of the harp and fell in love with the beautiful woman who played it, long before he became a vampire. When Nick fails in his attempt to purchase the harp, he steals it from the auction house. When the auctioneer shows up dead with a broken neck, Natalie fears Nick has killed to recapture a moment from his history, and an archaeologist shows up looking to return the harp to its rightful home of origin, Wales.

**42. "A More Permanent Hell"** Written by Ron Taylor; Directed by John Kapelos; airdate: May 5, 1995; *Guest Cast:* Sharon Bernbaum (Marybeth Ellis).

Dr. Carter, a prominent astronomer, dies after learning that a 5-mile-wide asteroid called 6748 is plummeting towards Earth and will destroy all life on the planet when it hits in three months. Nick and Schanke, though shocked by the revelation, must determine if Carter was killed or if she committed suicide. Panic and confusion set in around the globe when news of the asteroid's collision goes public, and worse, vampire attacks are on the increase. Desperate to survive, Natalie begs Nick to bring her over so that she might survive the coming apocalypse.

**43. "The Code"** Written by John Kapelos; Directed by Clay Borris; airdate: May 13, 1995; *Guest Cast:* Joseph Ziegler (Delehanty); David Nerman (Wade); Bridget Giggs (Gwen Madison); Anna-Louise Richardson (Irene); Conrad Bergschneider (Duke); Ron Hastings (Prospector); Shelley Cook (Gwen Stunt Double); Brian Jageroky (Prospector Stunt Double); Anton Tyukodi (Schanke Stunt Double).

As a cold winter strikes town, Schanke feels burned out, and a beautiful model overdoses on cocaine. Nick thinks that her death may be more mysterious than it looks, while Schanke's ex-partner, Delehanty, pays him a visit. When a second person also dies in the same night from drugs, Schanke

and Nick have reason to suspect that a popular over-the-counter medication is actually poisoned with mercury, and that the cocaine is incidental in the equation. Meanwhile, Nick is jealous over Schanke's relationship with his friend, and Schanke resigns from the force to join his ex-partner's detective agency in Arizona.

**44. "Curiouser and Curiouser"** Written by Phil Bedard and Larry Lalonde; Directed by Jon Cassar; airdate: May 20, 1995; *Guest Cast:* Judith Scott (Carol Lewis); Dyanne Dimarco (Alicia Carpenter); Steve Cumyn (Larry); Carla Renee (Monica-female mortal); Rick Forsayeth (Nick Stunt Double); John Stead (Stunt Bandit); C.J. Fidler (Stunt Vampire).

Masked bandits attack the Raven, and an innocent mortal woman dies in Nick's heroic attempt to stop the thugs. As Nick struggles with his guilt, he learns that the Nightcrawler, LaCroix, has apparently been murdered: stabbed through the heart. As Internal Affairs ruthlessly interrogates Nick about his culpability in the bar killing, Knight is victimized by strange visions.

**45. "Near Death"** Written by Phil Bedard and Larry Lalonde; Directed by Nicholas J. Gray; airdate: July 8, 1995; *Guest Cast:* Julia Stewart (Dr. Dianna Linsman); Colin Fox (Dr. Alex Nystrom); Amanda Tapping (Dr. Naomi Ross); Paul Emile Frappier (Dr. Joel Becker); Dyanne Dimarco (The Guide); Paul R. Rutledge (Dr. Julian Weiner).

Nick and Schanke investigate the death of a man who shouldn't be dead—he died of no apparent physical cause. They take Natalie with them to investigate a neurological institute where the dead man was part of an experimental research project involving consciousness states. A scientist there tells Nick that she is mapping a mental landscape where life and death meet, a revelation which spurs Nick's interest in death and the moment long ago when he "died" as a mortal and came back a vampire. Nick further learns that the scientists are flatlining, deliberately inducing temporary brain death, to face the next world ... an experience Nick is eager to embrace.

**46. "Baby, Baby"** Written by Morrie Ruvinsky; Directed by Geraint Wyn-Davies; airdate: July 15, 1995; *Guest Cast:* Denise Virieux (Serena); Page Fletcher (Calvin Trilling); Richard Blackburn (Sgt. Mandrake); Nicu Branzea (Emile); Pierre Peloquin (Armand); Maxim Ray (Louise).

A construction worker plunges to his death on a work site, and Nick and Schanke must determine if the victim was pushed or he just fell. Complicating matters for Nick is the fact that one of the two prime suspects is Serena, a woman ... and vampire ... from his past. The other suspect is Serena's mortal lover, a tough guy who carries an extra Y chromosome and therefore an increased propensity for violent behavior. LaCroix informs Nick that Serena, as in the past, wants a baby and needs an XYY to conceive a child ... and become mortal again.

**47. "Close Call"** Written by Michael Sadowski; Directed by Clay Borris; airdate: July 22, 1995; *Guest Cast:* John Stoneham Sr.(Fugitive); Karen LeBlanc (Vera); Christina Cox (Motorcycle Cop); Laura Robinson (Reporter); Tracey Cook (Alma); Bryan Renfro (Crazed Gunman); Quyen Hua (Hostage); Rober Bockstall (Carl); Jason Blicher (Bobby Mateo); Randy Butcher (Shooter); Tony Perri (Bus Driver); Cynthia Belliveau (Alexandria); Michael Simpson (Rogers); Angela Moore (Officer #1); David Blacker (Officer #2); Kimberly Huie (Hellman); Rick Forsayeth (Nick Stunt Double).

Nick is forced to reveal his nature as a vampire to Schanke during a dangerous bust, and then he hypnotizes his partner to forget everything he witnessed. The hypnotizing is not successful, however,

and Schanke starts to ask uncomfortable questions about his less-than-normal partner. He investigates Nick's friendship with Janette, his fascination with the Nightcrawler (LaCroix), and his unusual behavior on the job. It is not long before the resourceful Schanke is researching vampires and undead creatures.

*Note:* This episode features clips from previous *Forever Knight* installments, including "Partners of the Month," "Last Act," "Hunters," "Fatal Mistake," and others.

**48. "Crazy Love"** written by William Schmidt; Directed by Don McCutcheon; airdate: July 29, 1995; *Guest Cast:* Peter Blais (Barlow); Danielle Brett (Amalia); Joyce Gordon (Nurse Simmons); Moynan King (Robyn Flood); Patrushka Sakula (Michelle Parker); Alyson Green (Erin Devon); Michelle Moffatt (Whitney); Richard Coira (Security Guard).

Nick and Janette have grown close in a romantic way again. Meanwhile, Nick and Schanke investigate the death of a mental patient. At first, the culprit is believed to be Mr. Barlow, an escaped patient himself, but Nick has his doubts about the man's innocence when he remembers a moment from his own past in which he longed to possess a woman heart and soul. Now the key to this crime revolves around discovering who wanted to forever "possess" the dead patient.

• *Third Season (1995–1996)*

**49. "Black Buddha" (Part I)** Written by James D. Parriott; Directed by Geraint Wyn-Davies; airdate: September 16, 1995; *Guest Cast:* Tamara Gorski (Claire Gibson); Stuart Hughes (Vudu); Gillian Vanderburgh (Karen); Ola Sturik (Newscaster); Justin Allder (Hawkeye); Thomas Mitchell (Mountie); Karen Waddell (Miller); Damon D'Oliveira (Inca); Rick Forsayeth (Nick Stunt Double); Jamie Jones (Vachon Stunt Double); Lloyd Adams (Inca Stunt Double).

A bomber passes an explosive device to his unwitting lover, an airline co-pilot who takes the deadly weapon airborne with her. The bomb explodes, destroying the airliner which is also carrying Captain Cohen and Schanke. A re-assigned Knight, working with rookie Tracy Vetter is devastated by the loss of his friend and captain, and sets out to catch the bomber known as "Vudu." The death of his friends sparks Nick's memories of another tragic night—aboard the *Titanic*, and Tracy has her first encounter with a vampire.

**50. "Black Buddha" (Part II)** Written by James D. Parriott; Directed by Geraint Wyn-Davies; airdate: September 23, 1995; *Guest Cast:* Stuart Hughes (Vudu); Ola Sturik (Newscaster); Karen Waddell (Miller); Greg Kramer (Screed); Damon D'Oliveira (Inca); Joanne Bacalso (Angel); Kristin Lehman (Urs); Emmanuelle Chrique (Jude Dreshnell); Rick Forsayeth (Nick Stunt Double); Jamie Jones (Vachon Stunt Double); Lloyd Adams (Inca Stunt Double).

A mad bomber is still on the loose in Toronto, and Nick remains in shock about the deaths of Schanke and Captain Cohen. Meanwhile, rookie Tracy Vetter has resisted Vachon's attempts to hypnotize her, and he holds her captive for a time. Nick learns that Vachon is fleeing an Incan vampire, a man from his long-ago past as a Spanish conquistador, while continuing to search for the motivations of the bombings. The bomber, Vudu, introduces himself to Tracy and sees to it that she (unknowingly) carries his next explosive concoction right into the police station.

**51. "Outside the Lines"** Written by Roy Sallows; Directed by Jon Cassar; airdate: September 30,

1995; *Guest Cast*: Callum Keith Rennie (Bruce Spencer); Michael Filopowich (Stu); Mitra Lovett (Cass); Brad Austin (J.T.); Jeff Wood (Greg); Jacques Tourangeau (Claude); Tom Costain (Leo); M.J. Lefebvre (Marie-Claire); Simon Barry (Giroux); Gabrielle Allan (Vicki); Chantelle Quesnel (Debbie); Starvoula Logothettis (Ann Meyers); Rick Forsayeth (Nick Stunt Double); C.J. Fidler (Stunt Dancer); Loren Peterson (Stunt Dancer); Ron Van Mart (Stunt Bouncer); Markus Parillo (Stunt German Officer).

Nick and Tracy investigate the rape and murder of a young woman at a night club. At the crime scene, Nick clashes with Bruce Spencer, an undercover cop who was working with the victim and her drug-dealing cohorts. Bruce ends up killing a suspect, J.T., but Nick catches him in the act and tries to warn Tracy that Bruce is no hero, despite his meteoric rise in the department. Tracy's family is close with Bruce, and she is resistant to Nick's theory that he could be a dirty cop ... until she investigates for herself.

**52. "Blackwing"** Written by Gillian Horvath; Directed by Allan Kroeker; airdate: October 7, 1995; *Guest Cast*: Denise LaCroix (Jess); Michelle Thrusti (Marian Blackwing); Jack Burning (Gary Blackwing); Glen Gould (Young Gary); Paula Barrett (Reporter); Victoria Mitchell (Judge Beatrice Payne); Peter Kelly Gaudreault (Mark Buckwater); Jim York (Roger Bland); Colm Magner (Security Guard); Rick Forsayeth (Nick Stunt Double); Branko Racki (Stunt Buckwater).

A Native American man involved in a land dispute with a company desiring to build a mall on tribal property is murdered in his bed with a traditional raven knife. The old man's granddaughter shares the dead man's power of vision, and she witnesses his death in a dream. Nick and Tracy recruit Marian to help them identify the murderer, but Nick becomes involved with Marian even as she uses her Native American healing powers to save him from a life of darkness.

**53. "Blind Faith"** Written by James Johnston; Directed by Clay Borris; airdate: October 14, 1995; *Guest Cast*: Diana Zimmer (Jody Fraser); Patrick Galligan (Rapist); Terry Nicholas (Rape Victim); Karen Glave (Female Cop); Desmond Campbell (Male Cop); Alisa Wiegers (Rape Victim #2); Lee J. Campbell (Bus Driver); Greg Kramer (Screed); David Storch (Doyle); Colm Magner (Security Guard); Rick Forsayeth (Nick Stunt Double); Michael Alexander (Stunt Double); Dogs trained by Birds and Animals Unlimited.

A blind woman's seeing eye-dog develops a distaste for sunlight and an appetite for blood ... becoming a full-fledged vampire known as a Kerousch. When a knife-wielding wacko who calls himself the "Doctor of Love" starts attacking women in the park, the dog, Perry, kills him. Tracy makes a connection between the murdered perp and the dog of her old college friend, Jody Fraser, who has been rendered blind by multiple sclerosis. When the vampire dog attacks a police officer who accidentally spills coffee on Jody, Nick realizes he will have to put the beloved pet down.

**54. "My Boyfriend Is a Vampire"** Written by Phil Bedard and Larry Lalonde; Directed by Allan Kroeker; airdate: October 21, 1995; *Guest Cast*: Geordie Johnson (Jerry Tate); Stephanie Louise Vallance (Charly Hawkes); Brittany Edgell (Maggie Dwyer); Normand Bissonnette (Bourbon); Patrice (Jacinta); Laura Adamo (Franceline); Lucia Verrelli (Julia); Chantalie Nadeau (Maria); Greg Kramer (Screed); Ray Kahnert (Nuberg); Rick Forsayeth (Nick Stunt Double); Bryan Thomas (Hitman); Shelley Cook (Dr. Joyce Double); Anton Tyucodi (Monk); James Binkley (Punk).

A woman claiming to be having an affair with a vampire is killed shortly after her appearance on *The*

*Jerry Show*, a sensationalistic talk show. Tracy interviews Vachon about the killing, and he warns her to tread lightly in the investigation, lest she become the killer's next target. Meanwhile, an upset Natalie feels that Nick is using her so as to be cured, an insight supported by the woman who loved the vampire on *The Jerry Show*. Tracy goes on *The Jerry Show* as a guest to see if the murder was related to the program, while Nick looks into the murder of *The Jerry Show*'s doctor.

**55. "Hearts of Darkness"** Written by J. Daniel Sexton; Directed by Clay Borris; airdate: October 28, 1995; *Guest Cast*: Kristin Lehman (Urs); Krista Bridges, Edward Juanz, Greg Kramer, Normand Bissonnette, Steve Bahal, David Nerman, Camille James-Adams, Ralph Small, Adriana Galic, Laura Catalano.

Another strange case for Nick and Tracy raises questions about vampire infiltrations into the human world. A man is found dead in an apartment by an amnesiac with no memory of how or why she came to be on the scene. As a creature of the night is suspected in the present, Nick must again confront his own demons from the past.

**56. "Trophy Girl"** Written by Michael Sadowski; Directed by Terry Steyn; airdate: November 5, 1995; *Guest Cast*: Alan C. Peterson (Christopher Scheer); Ken Smith (Suspect #1); Randy Butcher (Suspect #2); Ellen Dubin (Ingrid Marr); Mary Jo Eustace (Heather); Dwight Bacquie (Manny); Polly Shannon (Liselle); Kristin Lehman (Urs); Douglas Miller (Jeffrey); Doug O'Keefe (Sedrick); Brian Kaulback (Bateman [Cop]); Rick Forsayeth (Nick Stunt Double); Mary Ann Boyle (Tracy Stunt Double).

On a violent bust, Tracy kills a perp in a shoot out, and feels remorse for ending a life. On the way home for the evening, Nick and Tracy pick up another gruesome case: the discovery of a decapitated woman washed ashore. Because the head and hands are missing, it is impossible for Natalie to identify the body, but she does determine that the perpetrator has a high level of surgical skill. When it is determined that the dead girl worked for an escort service, Tracy goes undercover to investigate, even as Nick visits an incarcerated serial killer in an attempt to understand the motives of the decapitator on the loose.

**57. "Let No Man Tear Asunder"** Written by Diane Cary; Directed by Clay Borris; airdate: November 11, 1995; *Guest Cast*: Jesse Collins (Hans Victor); Colette Stevenson (Veronica); Henry Chan (Tattoo Artist); Kelly Fiddick (Mel Purdy); Scott Gibson (Malora's Boyfriend); Donna Goodhand (Dr. Valerie Freeman); Deborah DeMille (Prostitute); Jonathan Potts (Walters); Jaya Karsemeyer (Sage Freeman); Rick Forsayeth (Nick Stunt Double); Mary Ann Boyle (Tracy Stunt Double); Marco Bianco (Walters Stunt Double); Rick Parker (Carriage Stunt); Sue Parker (Veronica Stunt Double); Jamie Jones (Hans Stunt Double).

A woman is found dead near a tattoo parlor in Chinatown with her heart torn from her chest and missing. Tracy and Nick suspect that someone attempted to surgically remove the heart so as to donate it to someone on the surgery waiting list. The specifics of the case cause Nick to recall a time when he had to decide if it was right to bring a friend's injured lover over to the world of vampirism. In the present, the trail leads to a transplant waiting list and a dangerous situation for Natalie, who shares the same blood type as someone very important on the self-same waiting list.

**58. "Night in Question"** Written by Gary Stephen Rieck; Directed by Nicholas J. Gray; airdate: November 18, 1995; *Guest Cast*: Melanie Nicholls-King (Dr. Turner); Demo Cates (Paramedic);

Allegra Fulton (Nurse #1); Alice Poon (Nurse #2); Anais Granofsky (Nurse #3); Dimitri Frid (Russian Soldier); Michael Rigupero (Detective Maurer); Don Dickinson (Detective Dunneback); Heather Hodgeson (Policewoman); Domenic Cuzzocrea (Leon Sharp); Jamie Jones (Nick Stunt Double); Mary Ann Boyle (Tracy Stunt Double); Marco Bianco (Leon Stunt Double).

Nick is rushed to the hospital after saving Tracy's life during a shoot out. While Tracy blames herself for Nick's death, Natalie and LaCroix help Nick to revive himself. Unfortunately, Nick awakens with amnesia, unable to recall any events or people from his long history. Meanwhile, Tracy also struggles with her memory, hoping to recall the face of the man who shot Nick.

**59. "Sons of Belial"** Written by Phil Bedard and Larry Lalonde; Directed by Clay Borris; airdate: November 25, 1995; *Guest Cast:* David Hemblen (Dr. Max Vanderwal); Frank Pellegrino (MacIsaac); Cheryl Swarts (Melanie Sawchuck); George Buza (Eric Sawchuck); Vincent Marino (Jailer); Eduardo Gomez (Ario); Marco Romano (Sancho); Peter Messaline (Inquisitor); Patrick Gallagher (Michael); Sean Roberge (Barnes); Johanna Black (Paula); Thea Andrews (Era); Rick Forsayeth (Nick Stunt Double); Robert Racki (Burly Stunt Double); Peter Szkoda (LaCroix Stunt Double); Anton Tyukodi (MacIsaac Stunt Double); Shelley Cook (Melanie Double).

A troubled woman drives her car off an expressway ledge, and Tracy and Nick believe the crime may not have been a simple suicide. When Natalie finds lamb's blood in the corpse's stomach, Nick recalls a time when he and LaCroix were captives of the Spanish Inquisition and nearly "exorcised." Nick learns from the dead woman's Bible-thumping brother that she was undergoing an exorcism shortly before her untimely end. Tracy and Nick visit the exorcist, an excommunicated priest, and observe as he conducts a ritual to free a possessed man.... But has the demon fled into Nick?

**60. "Strings"** Written by Roy Sallows; Directed by Don McCutcheon; airdate: January 13, 1996; *Guest Cast:* Joy Tanner (Christie Black); Peter Hutt (Dr. Ben McGee).

Nick and Tracy investigate the assassination of a woman on a Toronto street, even as Nick recalls his service to the czar of Russia, as well as his encounters with the hypnotic (and vampiric) Rasputin. In the present, a second assassination is planned but thwarted by Nick's timely intervention. When another murder occurs, the identity of the culprit is an unexpected surprise.

**61. "Fever"** Written by Gillian Horvath; Directed by Alan Simmonds; airdate: January 20, 1996; *Guest Cast:* Greg Kramer (Screed); Bruce Hunter (Calvin).

A scientist is killed in her laboratory, pushed down a flight of stairs, but not before a lab rat contaminated with a strain of HIV virus escapes. The vampire Screed bites the rat and is infected by a disease which starves vampires no matter how much blood they consume. As the disease spreads to Vachon, Natalie attempts to diagnose the illness, which she has identified as a multiplying retrovirus. Soon, Nick becomes sick as well, and starts to sweat blood.

**62. "Dead of Night"** Written by Michael Sadowski; Directed by Jon Cassar; airdate: January 27, 1996; *Guest Cast:* Kari Matchett (Alyssa); Jack Duffy (Spencer); Barbara Radecki (Andrea King); Peter Keleghan (Gefford Weintroff); Catherine Williams (Female Cop); Leon Pownall (Davis Ogden); Kim Bourne (Shirelle); Corinne Conley (Nanna Tash); Adam Bramble (Priest); Courtney Greig (Young Tracy); Maia Pilar (Susan); Richard Sali (Jack Scalley); Panou Mowling (Jimmy Reese); Rick Forsayeth (Nick Stunt Double); Mary Ann Boyles (Tracy Stunt Double); Danny Lima (Stunt Driver).

A man dies at a supposedly haunted house, and the only eyewitness to the crime reports having seen a strange silhouette on the balcony just seconds after the man plunged to his death. Nick, Tracy, and Natalie explore Kessel House for signs of foul play, but instead encounter hints of ominous supernatural activity, including a ghostly white figure. An aficionado of the occult warns that the house is a reverse medium through which the dead appear to the living to achieve closure, and soon enough, people from the past reappear to confront Nick and the others. In particular, Nick encounters Alyssa, his onetime wife, Natalie faces a long-dead grandma to whom she never said goodbye, and Tracy meets the spirit of a girlhood friend who was killed on the railroad tracks.

**63. “The Games Vampires Play”** Written by Naomi Janzen; Directed by Nicholas J. Gray; airdate: February 3, 1996; *Guest Cast:* Catherine Bruhier (Rita); George Chiang (R.H. Lo); Diane Plotka (Linda Fulford); Kelley Grando (Virtual Beauty); Moe Kelso (Megan); Rick Forsayeth (Nick Stunt Double).

A software developer for a new virtual reality game system is murdered, execution-style, while playing a vampire game. Meanwhile, Nick is feeling bored and uninterested in the job, and the virtual reality vampire game relieves his tension. Nick becomes obsessed with the game, which requires him to kill humans to get to the next level, but he is also convinced that clues inside the game will lead him to the culprit, the co-owner of the company, and a beautiful woman named Rita. The game is self-deleting, which means that Nick has only twelve hours to beat it and discover the clue which will nail Rita.

**64. “The Human Factor”** Written by Phil Bedard and Larry Lalonde; Directed by Geraint Wyn-Davies; airdate: February 10, 1996; *Guest Cast:* Deborah Duchene (Janette); Jean Pierre Bergeron (Mario LaRouche); Soo Garay (Nancy); Katia De Pena (Griffin); Galen Wyn-Davies (Patrick McDonagh); Lucy Peacock (Peggy Bolger); David Blacker (Officer Peter Schull); David Keeley (Robert McDonagh); Carlo Rota (Roy Martin); Rick Forsayeth (Nick Stunt Double); C.J. Fidler (Janette Stunt Double); Danny Lima (Innes Stunt Double); Ron Van Hart (Robert Stunt Double).

A man has been murdered, and the composite of the killer matches a description of Nick’s longtime friend, Janette. The beautiful vampire returns to town seeking Nick’s assistance, even though he is still bitter that she left without seeing him, or saying goodbye. Janette confides in Nick that she was starting to feel that his quest to become mortal was a noble one, and she even fell in love with a human fireman, who was then framed and murdered for a crime he didn’t commit. Now, Janette needs Nick to help prove to the world that her lover was innocent, and even more strangely, Nick learns that through the act of human love, Janette has accomplished what he has only dreamed about: she has become human again.

**65. “Avenging Angel”** Written by Alison Bingeman; Directed by Alan Simmonds; airdate: February 17, 1996; *Guest Cast:* Diane Cary (Laura Stone); Denise Norman (Battered Woman); Lindsey Connell (Julie Henderson); Louisa Martin (Gloria Henderson); Sharry Flett (Barbara Vetter); James Rankin (Reporter); Simon Sinn (Wei); Charmaine D. Lau (Mai-Loong); Hardee T. Lineham (Jack Henderson); Peggy Coffey (ER Doctor); Shari Hollett (Female Uniform Cop); David Crean (Derrick Schmidt); Calvin Green (Male Uniform Cop); Rick Forsayeth (Nick Stunt Double); Mary Ann Boyles (Tracy Stunt Double); Sandra Adams (Mai-Loong Stunt Double); John Stoneham Jr. (Henderson Stunt Double).

Tracy’s mother is in town for a visit while Nick and Tracy investigate a murder at a battered women’s



shelter. The abuse of women spurs unpleasant memories for Nick, who recalls events from the Orient in which a lovely concubine was mistreated by her master. In the present, Nick and Tracy track down their suspect, a man who has raped his daughter repeatedly and is still on the loose. When the law can take no action to protect the innocent, social worker Laura Stone of the shelter decides it is time to take matters into her own hands.

**66. “Fallen Idol”** Written by Gary Stephen Rieck; Directed by Geraint Wyn-Davies; airdate: February 24, 1996; *Guest Cast*: Rob Stefaniuk (Joey Martin); Todd William Schroeder (Henry Ellis); Jim Mezon (Miles Filbourn); Layton Morrison (Nitro); Simon Bradbury (Director); Selina Martin (Police Woman); B.J. McQueen (Tank Williams); Tony Nappo (The Shark); Hayden Christensen (Andre); Bob King (Eddie Phelps); Kevin Rushton (Johnny Harris); Lina Giornofelice (Woman in Bar).

A mentally retarded boy believes that his uncle, a professional wrestler called Bulldozer, is responsible for murdering another wrestler, Nitro. Bulldozer is arrested and questioned for the murder while Natalie and Nick assume joint (temporary) custody of Joey, the boy and only eyewitness to the crime. Natalie injects Joey with a sample of Nick’s blood to help heal his mental impairment and restore his brain to normal. With Joey’s help, the case is solved. But how is the boy to cope when the injection wears off and he loses his newfound intelligence?

**67. “Jane Doe”** Written by Michael Sadowski; Directed by Nicholas J. Gray; airdate: April 27, 1996; *Guest Cast*: Ron White (Jordan Manning); Marilyn Denis (Host); Steve Michalchuk (Gypsy); Duff MacDonald (Hitler); Francisca Zentilli (Uniformed Cop); Robbie Rox (Big George); Paul Miller (Lt. Miller); Renee Polley (Nurse); Mary Fallick (Stunt Miriam).

A murder victim has been mutilated and disfigured so as to prevent her identification by the police. Captain Reese suspects that a racist serial killer and bestselling author, Jordan Manning, is responsible for this and other similar brutalities, and he assigns Tracy to help Natalie i.d. the body. Reese’s hatred for the white supremacist becomes obsessive and he is brought up on (false) charges for beating Manning. Meanwhile, Nick recalls his own experience with another hate mongerer, Adolf Hitler, with LaCroix in post World War I Germany. Tracy and Natalie put the pieces of the “Jane Doe” puzzle together but they need a hair sample from Manning to connect him with the crime, and Captain Reese may be the man to get it if he can only control his anger.

**68. “Francesca”** Written by Gillian Horvath; Directed by Nigel Bennett; airdate: May 4, 1996; *Guest Cast*: Maurice Dean Wint (Frank); Brooke Johnson (Lisa Kadlee).

A patient undergoing hypnotherapy regression finds his way to a past life and remembers an experience of vampirism with Nick. Nick’s identity is threatened by this discovery, which involves a time in his past when he was feeding on humans.

**69. “Ashes to Ashes”** Written by Phil Bedard and Larry Lalonde; Directed by Jon Cassar; airdate: May 11, 1996; *Guest Cast*: Kathryn Long (Divia); Ron Obadia (Hamid Coram); Kristin Lehman (Urs); Rick Forsayeth (Nick Stunt Double); Peter Skoda (LaCroix Stunt Double); Erin Jarvis (Divia Stunt Double).

A tomb in the Valley of Kings in Egypt has been forced open by robbers, and now an evil, ancient presence is loose in Toronto—in the Raven to be precise. Nick is alerted by an anonymous tip that there is a corpse in the Raven, and LaCroix is soon arrested for the grisly murder. The corpse is

identified as Hamid Coram, an Egyptian grave-robber, and LaCroix soon realizes that Divia, the demonic daughter who brought him over in Pompeii, has escaped from her eternal prison. Now Nick and LaCroix are faced with a very old breed of vampire, a vampire who has killed Urs, contaminated Vachon with her evil, and set her sights on murdering Nick.

**70. “Last Knight”** Written by Michael Sadowski; Directed by Geraint Wyn-Davies; airdate: May 18, 1996; *Guest Cast:* Anna Pappas (Dr. Laura Haynes); Roger Honeywell (Dawkins); Adam Large (Cop #1); Stuart Williams (Pencil Pusher).

One of Natalie’s closest friends commits suicide, sending Natalie into a deep depression. She asks Nick to bring her over, a risk he is unwilling to take, even as a hostage situation erupts in the precinct house. Tracy is critically wounded in the ensuing shoot out, and a despondent Nick considers leaving town with LaCroix. When Tracy dies, Nick and Natalie have a final reckoning, and the night ends in darkness for both of them.

*Note:* This episode features footage from “Last Act,” “Black Buddha,” “The Human Factor,” and others.

## *The X-Files (1993–)*

### CRITICAL RECEPTION

“The direction is atmospheric, the scripts are tight, the dialogue is crisp, the tone uneasy and grim.... How can anyone not *love* this show? ... a scary funhouse freakshow through the human heart, mind and spirit.”—David Bischoff, *Omni*, December 1994, pages 43-50.

“*The X-Files* employs scare tactics ... but doesn’t let them upstage its speculative purpose. Each episode is a mood piece—a queasy odyssey ... as scary as *The Twilight Zone* and much sexier.... What’s erotic about the show is its slow progression from reverie to revelation, stopping just short of rapture. It wants to swoon, but swooning would mean shutting its eyes, and there’s so much to see.”—James Wolcott, *New Leader*: “X Factor,” April 18, 1994, pages 98–100.

“Many weeks ... *The X-Files* is as good as any movie, satirizing the characters’ obsessiveness while still delivering shudders.”—Matt Roush, *TV Guide*, January 2-8, 1999, page 23.

“Chris Carter’s contemporary series explores the realms of Science Fiction and supernatural Horror with conviction and subtlety, and is currently achieving a mainstream success unheard of for a genre series. The fusion of familiar dramatic conventions and the human condition, with mysteries set ‘within the realms of extreme possibility’ entertains with sophistication. The attractive, *Avengers*-like Mulder and Scully guide the audience through the twilight worlds between science and superstition.”—Michael Filis, *Shivers* Issue #34: “Shivers Horror Awards Television Top 25,” page 9, October 1996.

### FORMAT

F.B.I. agent Fox Mulder (David Duchovny) is a believer. He is open to the most extreme possibilities, including alien abduction, reincarnation, lycanthropy, soul transmigration, and just about anything else that is out of the norm. This openness to unconventional ideas and the paranormal has saddled the handsome Mulder with the nickname “Spooky,” but it has also earned him his position in the Bureau. A psychologist and criminal profiler extraordinaire, Mulder now investigates “The X-Files,” the F.B.I.’s backlog of unsolved, inexplicable cases. This is especially important work to Mulder because his sister Samantha disappeared one night, long ago, when she and Fox were watching *The Magician* on TV. Mulder now believes she was abducted by aliens for some dark purpose.

Dana Scully (Gillian Anderson) is *not* a believer. A medical doctor and devout Catholic, Dana regards science as the signpost to truth. She also works on the X-Files, is partnered with Mulder, and seeks to validate his life’s work through reason and scientific method. Daughter of a career naval officer, the beautiful Scully believes in loyalty and duty, and though she was first assigned to the X-Files to debunk Mulder’s work, she is the most valuable partner imaginable: competent, knowledgeable, supportive, creative in her solutions, and a constant sparring partner for Fox.

Under the direction of sullen but supportive assistant director Skinner (Mitch Pileggi), Mulder and Scully investigate the unexplained with almost religious zeal. Devil cults (“Die Hand der Verletzt”),

astral projection (“The Walk”), serial killers (“Unruhe”), giant fluke worms (“The Host”), even body swaps (“Dreamland”) have fallen under their jurisdiction during the long run of *The X-Files*. Mulder and Scully deal not only with the unknown and the horrific, but with a very real “shadow” government, an elite ruling class of conspirators who hope to facilitate the alien colonization of Earth. Among the evil doers are The Well-Manicured Man (John Neville) and the villainous Cigarette Smoking Man (William B. Davis), who assassinated Kennedy and Martin Luther King, Jr. (“Musings of a Cigarette Smoking Man”).

Over the years, the supporting cast on *The X-Files* has grown considerably. Mulder has had various secret sources in the government (all with names like “Deep Throat” [Jerry Hardin] and “X” [Stephen Williams]), and learned about his parents’ secret involvement in Samantha’s abduction. Early in the show’s run, Dana’s own sister, a kind of New Age bohemian, is murdered by the conspiracy, and Dana’s mother and brother (a naval officer) have also been seen occasionally. Another source of Mulder’s “crazy” stories are “The Lone Gunmen,” a comic trio of tech-nerds who publish a conspiracy magazine and surf the net nitpicking scientific errors on *Earth II* (1995).

Serving evil are several recurring characters. Alex Krycek (Nicholas Lea) is a rogue FBI agent who teamed briefly with Mulder when Scully was abducted during the second season. Since then, Krycek has been a double agent, and has even been possessed by the nasty “black cancer” alien life form often seen. In Season 5, a new character named Agent Spender (Chris Owens) was introduced, and was established as the son of the Cigarette Smoking Man.

*The X-Files* has taken many twists and turns over the years. The files were closed down in the finale of the first season (“The Erlenmeyer Flask”), but reopened in Season 2 after Scully’s inexplicable disappearance (“Ascension”). The files were then destroyed in the cliffhanger of Season 5 (“The End”) and the work was abandoned by the F.B.I. until revived following the events of the 1998 *X-Files* feature film, *Fight the Future*. Still, all was not well. In the sixth season, Mulder and Scully were taken off the X-Files (“The Beginning”), and replaced by the nefarious Agent Spender. Their new boss was a less-understanding A.D. named Kersh, who had a special dislike for Mulder. As the sixth season closed, Mulder was incarcerated in an insane asylum, having gone crazy, and Scully discovered an alien spaceship on the beach of South Africa (“Biogenesis”).

Stories on Chris Carter’s *X-Files* have involved Dana’s abduction (“Duane Barry,” “Ascension,” “One Breath”), Mulder’s search for his sister (“Little Green Men,” “Colony,” “Paper Hearts”), the Jersey Devil (“The Jersey Devil”), inbred brothers (“Home”), mutants (“Squeeze,” “Teliko,” “2Shy”), prehistoric monsters (“Ice,” “Darkness Falls”), serial killers (“Irresistible,” “Grotesque”), demons (“Terms of Endearment”), monsters of every possible variety, the global conspiracy (“The Erlenmeyer Flask,” “The Red and the Black,” “Patient X”) and even the Bermuda Triangle (“Triangle”). Consistently complex and challenging, *The X-Files* has become a new TV classic, in part because creator Chris Carter never talks (or writes) down to his audience. This is a show that succeeds by being scary *and* smart. Nothing less than a wonder, *The X-Files* is the greatest horror TV series of the modern age.

## HISTORY

Greatness sometimes emerges from the most unexpected venues. Before creating the complex *The X-Files* (and later the beautiful and symbolic *Millennium* [1996-99] and *Harsh Realm* [1999]), the talented producer/writer/director named Chris Carter was editor of *Surfing* magazine, and a writer of

“youth” movies for Disney’s television division. All of this industry experience was but prologue for Carter’s ultimate fame, his ascension to the role of latter day Rod Serling or Gene Roddenberry. But, as Carter has recounted on many occasions, his ideas for the enormously popular *The X-Files* came not from some inspired muse within, but out of his childhood memories, his feelings of nostalgia, and his desire to create a “homage” to a series of the past: *Kolchak: The Night Stalker* (1974-75):

I was a big fan of *The Night Stalker*. I thought it was great. I watched it as a teenager and it’s something no one has ever tried to do again. So I came up with what I felt was a show in the vein of the *Night Stalker* but without the built-in problems—which was we couldn’t do the monster-of-the-week or vampire-of-the-week.... What appealed to me is that I could tell good, smart stories, rooted in a speculative science.<sup>1</sup>

Carter is being overmodest in this description of the wonderful TV series he created. He did far more than build on the success of any single past horror TV triumph. In fact, he structured his new program in an artistic manner that far surpassed “The little guy against city hall”/“Monster of the week” formats which dominated *Kolchak*’s abbreviated network run back in the mid-70s. Instead, Carter gave birth to a brilliant metaphor for how the human mind operates (belief vs. nonbelief) and then set that analogy against every modern mythology and urban legend possible, from bigfoot (or rather the Jersey Devil) and the Bermuda triangle (“Triangle”) to alien abductions (“Duane Barry”/“Ascension”).

In the case of *The X-Files*, Carter envisioned two mythic heroes and partners, a man and a woman, who each held opposite (and rigid) views of the world’s “real” nature. One was to be a believer, the other a skeptic. The skeptic would use science as the yardstick for proof, the other an intuitive understanding that there are some things on this planet that we just cannot explain rationally. Thus every episode of *The X-Files* examines some mystery (time travel, psychic phenomena, spontaneous human combustion, prehistoric water dwellers, demonic possession, the impact of astrological factors on the human psyche) through these dual perspectives, which gives the series a powerful edge over horror series which espouse or describe no specific worldview.

There has been much written in fan and literary circles about the fact that the central troika of the classic *Star Trek* (1966-69) represents ego (Kirk), id (McCoy), and superego (Spock). Indeed, the unceasing joy of *Star Trek* is watching how Spock and McCoy debate life, and Kirk, in the middle, mediates and makes decisions based on their opposing input. This trio of enterprising heroes roughly represents how a single human being thinks and makes decisions. Emotion on the one hand, logic on the other, with a “listener” in between mediating and balancing the two. On many occasions, this relationship has been powerfully and artfully portrayed. In *Star Trek II: The Wrath of Khan* (1982), for instance, Kirk’s reading glasses show up with one shattered lens after Spock’s death. This cracked glass, through which Kirk literally “sees,” represents the loss of Spock and of “logic” from the equation that dictates his decisions. Similarly, on Chris Carter’s *X-Files*, Scully (the skeptic) and Mulder (the believer) likewise represent two facets of the universal human personality: both the need to have things explained, and the desire to believe in something *sans* explanation, something larger and more important than us ... a leap of faith. As Carter relates, the Mulder/Scully combination, a perfect metaphor for the dichotomy of the human mind (faith vs. facts), also represents facets of his own personality:

They [Mulder & Scully] are equal parts of my desire to believe in something and my inability to

believe in something. My skepticism and my faith.... I want, like a lot of people do, to have the experience of witnessing a paranormal phenomenon. At the same time I want not to accept it, but to question it.<sup>2</sup>

With his central characters created for optimum artistic effect, Carter went about fashioning his show for the Fox Network, the fledgling competitor to the big American “Big Three” whose only previous hits had been the Matt Groening animated series, *The Simpsons* (1987–), and the Aaron Spelling high school melodrama, *Beverly Hills 90210* (1990–2000). Strangely, what happened next was nothing short of a miracle (if one believes in such things, that is!). The actors who were cast in the leading roles of Dana Scully and Fox Mulder came to embody Carter’s belief vs. skepticism dichotomy in nothing less than a perfect way. There was an instant chemistry between David Duchovny (as the believer) and Gillian Anderson (as the skeptic) that no amount of good writing could have planned or created. An intellectual, physical and romantic attraction was forged between these two excellent performers in short order. Again, like the chemistry between Nimoy and Shatner in *Star Trek*, *The X-Files* took a good idea on the page and translated it to brilliance on the stage through inspired casting. *The X-Files* represented Anderson’s first TV work, and Duchovny had appeared only in oddball films such as *Kalifornia* (1993) with Brad Pitt and *The Rapture* (1992) with Mimi Rogers, but these two unknown performers nonetheless created a symbiosis that has kept the series going strong and walking tall for six years (and counting).

There are a number of “explanations” for this chemistry between actors. Some feel that the fact that Duchovny (in reality) is the skeptic and Anderson (in reality) is the believer has lent their performances a special joy: each one is playing the devil’s advocate to the hilt, espousing an opposite viewpoint from the one really held. Others have described the chemistry as purely sexual, and indeed there have been (unconfirmed) rumors on the Internet that Duchovny and Anderson had a brief physical “relationship” early in the show’s history. In short, everyone has their idea of why, precisely, this cast has managed to click in a way that no cast had clicked in the genre since the original *Star Trek* or *Kolchak: The Night Stalker*. Even the actors themselves have debated the origin of their remarkable on-screen chemistry. David Duchovny has forwarded the notion that the series is really cleverly designed as a “role reversal,” with Scully being the more hard-nosed, authoritarian, traditionally “male” role, and Mulder representing a more open, hence “female” perspective:

I think the male/female roles are switched ... Mulder is more intuitive, working from his emotions, gut instinct. Scully is more practical. If the show was arch or camp, I wouldn’t be here. There’s no joy in playing an expositional puppet. I think *X-Files* knows how to deliver a lot of information and still make the story move along.<sup>3</sup>

Gillian Anderson has not minced words regarding her chemistry with Duchovny, either. She has punctuated the debate by stating, simply: “It is something completely beyond our control—two people either have it or they don’t.”<sup>4</sup>

With two excellent performances dominating *The X-Files*, the series could have come to dynamic life merely on the basis of the Duchovny/Anderson chemistry, but creator Chris Carter also imbued *The X-Files* with a number of interesting thematic flourishes that have made it a remarkable series. Otherwise, it might have merely been *She Wolf of London*—another horror show which thrived on the chemistry between its leads. Firstly, Carter created what many writers have called “the mytharc.” Though J. Michael Straczynski loudly claims in print all the time that *Babylon 5* (1993-98) was the

first show to feature a story arc, *The X-Files* was running concurrently and also featured an (arguably more interesting) arc. (Actually, *Twin Peaks* [1990-91] had a story arc, *Blake's 7* [1978-81] had a story arc, *Dark Shadows* [1991] had a story arc, even *Stephen King's The Golden Years* [1991] had a story arc, so Straczynski's boastful claim is a load of hooey.) Specifically, Carter provided Mulder with an interesting back-story: the abduction of his sister, Samantha, and the involvement of his father in a multinational conspiracy. Both of these elements lent many early episodes of *The X-Files* a complexity beyond a simple "monster of the week" formula. Over six years, the search for Mulder's missing sister has taken some fascinating turns, particularly in the fourth season episode "Paper Hearts," and the conspiracy has now been viewed from a number of perspectives, both alien and human. Though some viewers may see Mulder's never-ending search for his sister as the 1990s equivalent of Richard Kimball's quest for the one-armed man in *The Fugitive*, *The X-Files* has utilized its story arc in a rather grand way. Besides providing an understandable motivation for Mulder's dedication to his work, Mulder's search for his sister has actually caused Scully to lose her own sister, Melissa—who was murdered by the conspiracy. Thus there is an element of irony and hypocrisy in this mythic search that Chris Carter and *The X-Files* handle in interesting, mature ways. Mulder is sometimes a traditional hero, and sometimes a selfish, obsessed antihero. The question is always being raised: What price the truth?

Of course, no great performances, and no interesting story arcs would have captured the attention of America so thoroughly had not *The X-Files* done something else right. Even in its first year, it flaunted a brilliant visual style. It utilized the language of film in a way that no TV series of recent vintage had managed so successfully. When *The X-Files* began airing in the fall of 1993, horror movies were failing at the box office big time, perhaps because filmmakers had forgotten how to scare audiences. Jason Voorhees, Michael Myers, Chucky, and Freddy Krueger had all been back in bad sequels so frequently that there was no longer a real sense of horror attached to these once fearsome icons. Freddy and Chucky were now, officially, wisecrackers, as funny as they were scary, and Jason and Michael had gone through the same plots so many times that horror had lost its spontaneity and surprises. On TV, *The X-Files* remembered that a combination of provocative stories, artistic use of cinematic techniques (use of meaningful angles, brilliant editing, effective mood music), and good acting could deliver chills quite effectively. In particular, *The X-Files* understood that the unknown, rather than the known (like Freddy or Chucky) could generate chills. What if a fluke worm human hybrid evolved in the sewers of New Jersey? What if a feral, primitive beast-woman existed just outside Atlantic City? What if a psychopath could somehow harness fire as a weapon? The premises were chilling, and the filmic execution of these concepts buttressed the scares with excellent visuals. Frankly, the visual quality and detail of *The X-Files* was astounding. As director Kim Manners described the process of putting the show together, the attention to the minute was staggering:

We have two units shooting this show; a first unit and a second unit, complete with sound, that are shooting all the time. It's a huge undertaking, and the attention to detail in each script is enormous. We don't feel that we're doing episodic television; we firmly believe we're doing a mini-feature every week, and that's pretty exciting.<sup>5</sup>

That dedication to detail shines through on virtually every of the nearly 140 *X-Files* aired thus far. Additionally, it helped *The X-Files* quickly gain a fan following. Although some genre notables at first scoffed at the show because its very name made it sound like tabloid television, others quickly realized just how much intelligence went into the development of Carter's drama. In 1993, the show's first season, the ratings started to grow, and, amazingly, the Fox Network decided to give the series a

second shot. This was a wise decision, and by the end of *The X-Files*' second season, the series was a bona fide hit and cult phenomenon. The second season also expanded the mythology of the series significantly by featuring the introduction of the double agent Alex Krycek (Nicholas Lea) and the abduction (and subsequent disappearance) of Scully. In fact, the latter plot development was a ploy to explain Gillian Anderson's pregnancy and sabbatical from the series!

The third year came and went, and *The X-Files* became a top ten hit for Fox, despite the fact that it aired on Friday nights, the same night of the week that had killed *Star Trek*, *Kolchak*, *Planet of the Apes* (1974), *V* (1984), and a variety of science fiction/horror themed programming over the last twenty-five years. By now, Fox realized that Chris Carter knew exactly what he was doing and entered negotiations with him to create a second series, *Millennium* (1996–1999). Fans of *The X-Files* were thus quite agitated when *Files* was bumped from its time slot and replaced by *Millennium* for that season. For its fourth season, *The X-Files* would instead air on Sunday nights at 9:00. Although there was much talk in the media about how *The X-Files* could not survive on Sunday nights, it startled everyone by doing even better than before! The show flourished on Sunday nights, even while *Millennium* failed to capture an audience on Fridays. The fourth season also saw the development of a new *X-Files* running subplot: Scully discovered she had contracted cancer by removing an implant placed in the back of her neck during her abduction. By this time, *The X-Files* was also garnering critical respect. The series was nominated for a number of Emmy Awards, including best dramatic series, best dramatic actress, and best actor. Though the series failed to win in these categories, David Duchovny (in competition against Lance Henriksen of *Millennium*), Gillian Anderson, and the series itself all took home Golden Globe Awards for the show's fourth year.

The writing on *The X-Files* also remained excellent. James Wong and Glen Morgan, the creators of *Space: Above and Beyond*, contributed "Home," what may be the best *X-Files* of all time, and Darin Morgan is quite popular for his serio-comic episodes, including "Jose Chung's 'From Outer Space'" and "Clyde Bruckman's Final Repose." Chris Carter is no slouch in the writing department either, and his contributions have been uniformly impressive.

During the hiatus between the fourth and fifth season, the *X-Files* production team followed *Star Trek*'s example and filmed a big-budget feature film which would debut the following summer. Oscar winner Martin Landau (*Space: 1999* [1975-77]) was the film's major guest star, and the film, directed by Rob Bowman, would feature the *almost* first kiss between Scully and Mulder. Once the film was in the can, Carter, Duchovny and Anderson returned for the fifth season of *The X-Files*. This season was an experimental one for the show because it reversed the series' central premise. Suddenly, Mulder lost his faith in the paranormal and his extraterrestrial ideas, and he feared he was the patsy of a giant "disinformation" campaign. Scully, buttressed by her own abduction experiences, became more open-minded to extreme possibilities and thus she and Mulder had switched purposes and roles. Many critics (in *Fangoria*, and *Cinefantastique* in particular) complained loudly that this new template was not very good. However, two years later these criticisms seem misplaced, as the fifth season produced some of the best stories yet seen, including the humorous *Roshomon*-like story "Bad Blood," in which Mulder's and Scully's perspectives on a case were dramatized in detail and went head to head, and the haunting "Folie a Deux," a nightmarish story about a skittering, insectlike monster who was sucking the lives out of human beings.

Another interesting story was Chris Carter's homage to *Frankenstein* films of the past, a black and white story called "Post-Modern Prometheus," which also managed to lampoon America's fascination



with *The Jerry Springer Show*, and its obsession with celebrity. Other episodes of the fifth season were written by celebrities such as Stephen King (“Chinga”) and William Gibson (“Kill Switch”).

*The X-Files: Fight the Future*, the *X-Files* movie, premiered after the fifth season cliffhanger “The End,” and was a major hit in the summer of 1998. Though it was not as big as *Deep Impact*, *Armageddon* and other film fare for the summer, it was enough of a success to assure an *X-Files* film franchise once the series closes down shop.

Changes again came to *The X-Files* during the sixth season. Star David Duchovny had recently married actress Tea Leoni (*Deep Impact* [1998]) and he wanted to live in Los Angeles with her while she worked on her own situation comedy series (the disastrous *The Naked Truth* [1996-97]). Of course, *The X-Files* had always been shot in Vancouver, so this was an enormous problem. Because Duchovny was now considered a major star, Carter, Fox, and the entire production company of *The X-Files* acquiesced to his demands. The series up and moved to L.A. permanently. Again, media critics were worried about what a change would mean for the well-loved series. Vancouver’s cold nights had suited *The X-Files* perfectly. Could sunny Los Angeles do the same? Chris Carter thought so:

Now that we’re in a mostly urban environment, we’re going to have to tell stories using the landscape that is presented to us ... Before, we had rain and misty conditions. Now we’ll have to make them, without it looking forced. Directors are using angles to create the atmosphere that will keep the show what it is. And you can do good, scary stories anywhere if you do it right.<sup>6</sup>

He was right: the change of venue was a nonissue. Instead, *The X-Files* seemed to open up in a remarkable new way. Scully and Mulder went to Nevada in the inspired “Drive,” and visited Area 51 in the two-part episode “Dreamland.” Los Angeles gave the show a new look, but it was also a good look. The same commitment to good storytelling and visual aplomb was obvious. Still, some critics were (again) not happy because *The X-Files* had taken another thematic turn. Although Mulder had found his faith again (thanks to the events of the feature film), the stories in the sixth season were more overtly humorous than before. In “Dreamland,” Mulder changed bodies with an Area 51 agent (played by Michael McKean), and this body swap story resulted in some humorous sequences, including Mulder and Scully together in a waterbed, and Duchovny’s mirror dance (in his underwear) with McKean. In “Rain King,” comedienne Victoria Jackson was involved in another semi-serious story about a lovelorn weatherman who could control the weather. “How the Ghosts Stole Christmas” featured Lily Tomlin and also seemed only semi-serious in intent, despite some very bloody moments. Delightfully, all these stories were good ones, and they stretched the boundaries of *The X-Files*. In fact, Chris Carter proved that *The X-Files* could treat the paranormal not only with chills and thrills, but with laughs.

As of this writing, some people believe that the sixth season was actually *The X-Files*’ best, as it mixed the good laughs with the conclusion of the conspiracy plotline (“Two Fathers,” “One Son”) and featured genuinely scary stories such as “Trevor,” “Milagro,” and “Field Trip.” If anything, the real difference in the *X-Files*’ sixth season was that Mulder and Scully’s relationship came to the forefront of each story. Though the individual stories were still important, Mulder and Scully’s emotional involvement was heightened. Scully was jealous of another woman in “Alpha,” Mulder lost his body in “Dreamland,” Scully and Mulder went undercover as husband and wife in “Arcadia,” Scully’s love for Mulder was exposed in “Milagro,” and so forth. Also in the sixth season, David Duchovny directed his first episode (“The Unnatural”), and the year ended with a shocking cliffhanger which put a new

spin on the conspiracy, and in fact, the origin of mankind as a species.

As a seventh season of *The X-Files* was in the offing, everything looked solid for another great year. And then, in the late summer of 1999, bad news came: David Duchovny and Chris Carter seemed intent on leaving *The X-Files* after the seventh season. Only Gillian Anderson was contracted to continue in an eighth season, so the show's ongoing life seemed in jeopardy. Worse, it was also revealed that David Duchovny had filed a lawsuit against Fox. He asserted that by selling the rights to *X-Files* repeats to the cable network FX, Fox (and Chris Carter) had cost him millions of dollars in lost money. So upset by this was Duchovny that he revealed that the seventh season would definitely be his last one with the show! Worse, this legal situation seemed to throw the very future of *The X-Files* in jeopardy, as it was uncertain that Duchovny would return for any future feature films. It is a shame to end the series on this down-note, especially after six years of excellent stories, but one senses that Duchovny is going through a bad case of David Caruso-itis. He no longer seems to enjoy the work on *The X-Files*, and if that is the case, quality is sure to suffer as the show enters its final year. In fact, the seventh season came and went, and Duchovny announced he would return to *The X-Files* only part time in the eighth season, headlining in only eleven of the 22 shows. In his place, it was reported Robert Patrick (of *T2* [1991]) would play Scully's new partner. As for Carter, he was back on board and rumored to be preparing a series based on "The Lone Gunmen" characters.

Despite what appears to be an unhappy ending for a great series, *The X-Files* has become a worldwide phenomenon. Like *Star Trek* and *The Twilight Zone* before it, it has now been seen in reruns, a feature film, comic books, collectible cards, original novels, video-cassette releases, and even action figures. The worldwide appeal of *The X-Files* is not surprising, and Chris Carter believes that it all has to do with the shivers:

If there is one thing that gives the series a broad, universal appeal, it's that we are *all* afraid of the same things. So what scares you in America scares you in Great Britain and scares people in Germany, Australia and in the 60 countries where the series is playing right now.<sup>7</sup>

*The X-Files* is one of the few network TV shows of the 1990s that will live well into the next millennium. It will be a perennial, like *Star Trek*, *I Love Lucy*, or *The Twilight Zone*, because its actors, its creator, its writers, and its directors have taken special care to outdo themselves every chance they get. The universal appeal of its scary stories and its two leads is a rarity in television, and a great gift from Chris Carter.

## CRITICAL COMMENTARY

*The X-Files* is a complex but worthwhile trip into terror. Its ongoing attempts to scare its audience through "extreme possibilities," the notion that certain mysteries on our planet cannot be solved through either reason or science, have made for great speculative entertainment since the early 1990s. This Chris Carter series has run a very long time now, yet it has been remarkably cohesive in its forays into fear. In particular, there have been ten subsections of horror that the series has exploited again and again, rather successfully. Because the series has run so long and returned to these subsets of themes so often, a road map for the series has been provided here. These subsets include:

1. "*Trust No One*"—in which the fear generated by the show concerns the U.S. government and the fact that it is secretly conducting secret experiments on its own people. In this type of story, the paranoia level is high as the government violates its sacred trust to represent the people, and seems

capable of any atrocity including murder and cover-ups.

2. *“Freaks of Nature”*—wherein mutants and monsters feed on or exploit the human populace. These freaks of nature are sometimes just beasts (“Home”) and sometimes they are evolutionary nightmares, genetic mutants who scare us because they threaten to become the norm. Some times the freaks of nature are caused by human irresponsibility (“The Host”), sometimes they are trying to fulfill a biological need (“2Shy,” “Teliko”) and sometimes they just happen, out of the blue (“D.P.O.”).

3. *“Foreign Fears”*—wherein ancient ethnic legends are proven to have basis in fact. This particular *X-Files* story plays on the fact that Americans tend to be arrogant in their belief that the world is just as it appears. In these stories, the “foreign” and ethnic legends of curses (“Teso Dos Bichos,” “Kaddish”), ghosts (“Hell Money”), and even goatlike blood-suckers (“El Mundo Gira”) are inevitably true, even though all these strange manifestations operate well beyond Western concepts of reality.

4. *“From the Dawn of Time”*—wherein creatures from prehistory (or ancient history) reassert themselves in the present because of climatic changes (“Firewalker,” “Agua Mala”), man’s encroachment on their territory (“The Jersey Devil,” “Darkness Falls,” “Detour”) or general interference in remote habitats (“Ice”). These lifeforms are often millions of years old, and they exhibit qualities inimical to human survival. Sometimes they exist in remote locations (the Pacific Northwest, a volcano, under layers of ice) and sometimes they are just around the corner (in North Carolina in “Field Trip”).

5. *“Aliens!”*—wherein extraterrestrial creatures are encountered (“Space,” Genderbender,” “Travelers”) but never really validated empirically. There is some degree of overlap between the mytharc conspiracy stories and the alien stories, as the mytharc involves the alien colonization of Earth and the ascension of an alien virus (the black oil) that was the planet’s original inhabitant.

6. *“God’s Masterplan”*—wherein elements of Christian religion/mythology are explored as “real” concepts. These are among the most interesting *X-Files* stories because they ask very interesting questions about our human nature. Is God real? Is the Devil (“Terms of Endearment,” “Die Hand der Verletzt”) real? Why can Mulder so easily believe in aliens, monsters, time loops, and the like, but not in scripture? Conversely, why does Scully allow herself to have “faith” and believe in Christian lore, but not the paranormal? Where is her precious science when it comes to Catholicism?

7. *“The Serial Killer”*—this style of *X-Files* story was dropped late in the show’s run (the mid-fourth season), to be assumed wholly by the equally interesting *Millennium*. Originally however, serial killers were examined quite frequently on *The X-Files* as a kind of evil “within” humanity archetype.

8. *“Psychic Phenomena”*—from astral projection (“The Walk”) to clairvoyance (“Clyde Bruckman’s Final Repose”), to soul transmigration (“The List”), and even the effect of heavenly bodies on human bodies (“Syzygy”), *The X-Files* has been obsessed with the exploration of psychic phenomena. Thus it can be seen as a continuation of the concepts explored in *One Step Beyond*, *The Sixth Sense*, *The Next Step Beyond*, *Beyond Reality*, and the precursor to *Psi Factor*.

9. *“The Mytharc”/“Conspiracy”*—wherein the history of the government’s association with aliens, Mulder’s family history, Scully’s abduction, and alien colonization come together to form a cohesive story. This subset of stories has a large supporting cast including The Cigarette Smoking Man, The Well Manicured Man, The Syndicate, Agent Fowley, Agent Krycek, Agent Spender, Cassandra

Spender, and Emily, Scully's ill-fated daughter. These stories often overlap with "Aliens!" and "Trust No One."

10. *"The Standards"*—terror TV has its own standards, the tropes it brings out again and again, because they have been successful before. *The X-Files* has demonstrated real wit and innovation in dealing with the horror standards that every series from *Night Gallery* to *Tales from the Crypt* have explored. These standards include the vampire story ("Bad Blood," "3"), the werewolf ("Shapes"), ghosts ("How the Ghosts Stole Christmas"), crazy computers ("Ghost in the Machine," "Kill Switch"), matters of time ("Synchrony," "Dod Kalm," "Monday"), succubi ("Avatar"), cannibalism ("Our Town"), tattoos ("Never Again"), evil dolls ("Chinga") and the like.

For easy access to the world of *The X-Files*, the following breakdown fits the majority of *The X-Files* episodes into appropriate categories. Please remember, however, that some episodes will appear under more than one category, as they mesh the various story concepts into one cohesive whole. An interesting experiment would be to watch all the "like" episodes together in marathon format to catalog the similarities (or differences) in concept, conceit and execution.

#### **"TRUST NO ONE"**

"Eve," "Ghost in the Machine," "Blood," "Sleepless," "Red Museum," "F. Emasculata," "Soft Light," "Wetwired," "Zero Sum," "The Pine Bluff Variant," "Drive," "Dreamland" (I & II)

#### **"FREAKS OF NATURE"**

"Squeeze," "Tooms," "The Jersey Devil," "The Host," "Humbug," "D.P.O.," "2Shy," "Teliko," "Home," "Small Potatoes," "Leonard Betts," "Detour"

#### **"FOREIGN FEARS"**

"Fresh Bones," "The Calusari," "Teso Dos Bichos," "Hell Money," "El Mundo Gira," "Kaddish," "Alpha," "Arcadia"

#### **"FROM THE DAWN OF TIME"**

"Ice," "Darkness Falls," "Firewalker," "Quagmire," "Field Trip," "Agua Mala," "The Jersey Devil," "Detour"

#### **"ALIENS!"**

"Pilot," "Space," "E.B.E." "Genderbender," "Little Green Men" "Jose Chung's 'From Outer Space,'" "Colony," "End Game," "Talitha Cumi," "Herrenvolk," "War of the Coprophages," "Tunguska," "Gethsemane," "Travelers," "The Red and the Black," "Patient X," "The Beginning," "The Unnatural," "Biogenesis"

#### **"GOD'S MASTERPLAN"**

"Miracle Man," "Die Hand der Verletzt," "Revelations," "All Souls," "Terms of Endearment"

#### **"THE SERIAL KILLER"**

"Irresistible," "Grotesque," "Unruhe," "Paper Hearts"

## **“PSYCHIC PHENOMENA”**

“Fire,” “Beyond the Sea,” “Shadows,” “Born Again,” “Lazarus,” “Young at Heart,” “Roland,” “The List,” “The Walk,” “Excelsius Dei,” “Aubrey,” “Clyde Bruckman’s Final Repose,” “Oubliette,” “Syzygy,” “Pusher,” “The Field Where I Died,” “Elegy,” “Kitsunegari,” “Mind’s Eye,” “Trevor,” “Milagro”

## **“THE MYTHARC”/“CONSPIRACY”**

“The Erlenmeyer Flask,” “Duane Barry,” “Ascension,” “Colony,” “End Game,” “Anasazi,” “The Blessing Way,” “Paper Clip,” “Piper Maru,” “Apocrypha,” “Zero Sum,” “Terma,” “Tunguska,” “Tempus Fugit,” “Max,” “731,” “Nisei,” “Musings of a Cigarette Smoking Man,” “A Christmas Carol,” “Emily,” “Gethsemane,” “Redux,” “Redux II,” “Patient X,” “The Red and the Black,” “The End,” “The Beginning,” “Two Fathers,” “One Son,” “Biogenesis”

## **“THE STANDARDS”**

“Shapes,” “Ghost in the Machine,” “3,” “Dod Kalm,” “Our Town,” “Avatar,” “Never Again,” “Synchrony,” “Triangle,” “How the Ghosts Stole Christmas,” “The Rain King,” “Monday,” “Bad Blood,” “Kill Switch,” “Chinga”

In addition to visiting these ten plots, *The X-Files* has also showed a commendable dedication to asking the great questions of our time, and telling stories about the most puzzling mysteries humankind has yet faced. In its first six years on the air, *The X-Files* has explored the following mysteries:

## **THE MYSTERIES**

1. Who Killed President Kennedy (“Musings of a Cigarette Smoking Man”)?
2. Who Killed Martin Luther King Jr. (“Musings of a Cigarette Smoking Man”)?
3. Do aliens exist? (see “Aliens!” and “Mytharc” categories above).
4. Does the Bermuda Triangle (or Devil’s Triangle) exist?
5. What really happened to the “Philadelphia Experiment” (“Dod Kalm”)?
6. What is going on in Area 51 (“Dreamland I & II”)?
7. Do prehistoric monsters like Nessie of Loch Ness exist (“Quagmire”)?
8. Do monsters like bigfoot exist (“The Jersey Devil”)?
9. Where did the Bible really come from (“Biogenesis”)?
10. Are there such things as past lives (“The Field Where I Died”)?

If intelligent, scary speculation on these and other topics is not enough to judge *The X-Files* to be a terrific horror series, the show is also successful in any number of other ways. In fact, this series is so

good that there is *not one* egregiously bad episode among the almost-150 aired thus far. Some critics may quibble about one story or another, some episodes may seem slower-paced than others, but there is literally not one flat-out, bad episode in this series.

Still, it is easy to be enthusiastic about a series without mentioning specifically why it is a good show. Therefore, it is only appropriate to discuss in detail the many reasons why Chris Carter's creation merits its position as the best horror TV series of the contemporary era.

Unlike *The Burning Zone* (1996-97), *Dark Skies* (1996-97), or *Poltergeist: The Legacy* (1996-99), *The X-Files* features a solid grounding in the sciences (biology, psychology, zoology, archaeology, geology ... you name it). More to the point, the series seems to have a genuine understanding of the sciences it utilizes to build its scary framework. Science is Scully's mantra in *The X-Files*, and therefore the series is unfailingly smart about its unceasing speculations. Whether the discussion of the week concerns Egodystonia (the inescapable compulsion to organize and reorganize things), Panspermia (the theory that life originated elsewhere, and that microbes from other solar systems arrived on Earth and established life), Polydactylism, ergot alkaloids, Bovine Growth Hormones, pheromones, CGR (Cosmic Galactic Radiation), or PCRs, it is unfailingly intelligent. Watching *The X-Files* each week is so illuminating that it is almost an educational experience. In an era of dumbed-down action series and lowest-common denominator situation comedies, the scientific grounding of this series sets it apart in a very special way. It is no exaggeration to state that Scully's constant discussions of DNA (in various episodes) have given this nation an understanding of it that would have been helpful in decades and years gone by (especially considering the verdict of the O.J. Simpson trial).

Delightfully, *The X-Files*' knowledge of science is equaled by its cinematic and television literacy. This is one TV series that is brilliantly self-reflexive and humorous in its understanding of the genre's past. Whether it be a brilliant and funny reference to Dr. Zaius and *Planet of the Apes* (1968) in "War of the Coprophages," an in-joke parodying the opening Star Destroyer "swoop" shot of *Star Wars* (1977) in "Jose Chung's 'From Outer Space,'" or a twist on the "body switch" concepts often dramatized in *Star Trek* (1966-69) in "Dreamland," *The X-Files* loves and remembers its own background. Casting Darren McGavin as Mulder's predecessor on *The X-Files* is a loving reference to that actor's well-remembered tenure on *Kolchak: The Night Stalker*, but the series has gone even further than such nice touches here and there. Its many episodes have been enlivened by performers from a variety of genre shows including *Space: 1999* (Nick Tate and Martin Landau), *Space: Above and Beyond* (Kristen Cloke, Rodney Rowland, Tucker Smallwood), *American Gothic* (Lucas Black), *Twin Peaks* (Don S. Davis, Kenneth Walsh) and others.

Sometimes, the references in *The X-Files* are deeper than one initially realizes. A succubus wears a red slicker in "Avatar," referencing the similarly-garbed killer in that great horror film from the 1970s, *Don't Look Now*. In "The Beginning," a technician in a nuclear power plant is named Homer, recalling the dim-witted lead character in *The Simpsons*. An even more delightful in-joke found Mulder and Scully being grilled in the same episode by a nasty woman named Maslin. Of course, Ms. Maslin is named after Janet Maslin, *The New York Times* film critic who gave *The X-Files* feature film a scathing review the previous summer. In the episode "Arcadia," Mulder and Scully go undercover in suburbia as a married couple named "the Petries," a name straight out of *The Dick Van Dyke* show. In the era of postmodern horror, *The X-Files* is the king of bizarre and ersatz references. It has an encyclopedic knowledge of television and horror that is a constant joy to behold. Humorous cameos

by Alex Trebek and Jesse Ventura, as well as beautiful performances from actors Charles Nelson Reilly and Peter Boyle are just a part of its self-referential tapestry.

If “smarts” about science and television/film history sound like purely intellectual merits, *The X-Files* boasts other excellent points to recommend it. Prime among these is Chris Carter’s penchant for social commentary. *The X-Files* uses a well-honed, topical approach to TV to discuss, analyze, mock, and examine the things which vex and terrify contemporary American society most. The fear that violence on TV creates violence in real life is the subject of “Wetwired.” “Excelsius Dei,” set in a retirement home, asks pertinent questions about the manner in which America treats its infirm and elderly. The aforementioned “Arcadia” is a brilliant send-up of affluent suburbia, and the elitist, fascist homeowner organizations which squash individuality and encourage a life run by strict “covenants” of do’s and don’ts. “Memento Mori” describes the evil of cancer in artistic, almost poetic terms. Faced with the prospect of having contracted the terminal disease, Scully calls it an “invader which joins with the invaded” and realizes that to “destroy it, you must destroy your own body.” Nice.

In its time on the air, *The X-Files* has tackled stories about discrimination (“Humbug”), endangered species (“Fearful Symmetry”), religious bigotry (“Red Museum”), in vitro fertilization (“Eve”), subliminal messages (“Blood”), the archetype of evil (“Irresistible”), and a variety of other interesting, controversial, and challenging topics. If TV *really* is an art form, if it *truly* exists to do more than sell detergent and fast food, then *The X-Files* represents the medium at its absolute best. Illuminating, funny, socially relevant ... *The X-Files* is everything one could want or hope it to be.

Beyond these virtues, *The X-Files* is adroit and confident with the manner in which it unfolds. Each season can be seen as a chapter in a video novel or some such larger work. The first year introduces Mulder and Scully and their world. The characters are defined not just by their own behavior and each other’s perspectives, but by their previous co-workers (“Lazarus,” “Young at Heart,” “Tooms,” “Fire”), friends, and even their enemies: all of whom are seen primarily in this introductory portion of the series, and not in later, more fast-moving sections. The second season develops the “conflict” as the X-Files are temporarily closed, the antagonists are introduced in their full villainy, and Scully is abducted. The third season sees the details of the global conspiracy emerge. The fourth season introduces a new threat, as Scully faces terminal cancer from her “abduction” experience. The fifth year shows Mulder in equal jeopardy as he loses his faith and becomes a cynical, rudderless soul. The movie sees Mulder’s faith reborn, and the sixth season brings yet a new danger: Mulder and Scully are taken off the X-files and forced to reevaluate their professional choices. Also in the sixth year, the conspiracy story climaxes, and then heads off in a bizarre new direction, even as the Mulder/Scully romantic relationship reaches new heights.

Besides featuring a fascinating arc with each season representing a chapter, *The X-Files* is never afraid to revisit an interesting story, or one that could use a more pronounced resolution. “Tooms” is a sequel to “Squeeze,” the story of a long-lived mutant who devours human livers and can elongate his body. “Pusher” and “Kitsunegari” are two chapters of the Robert Modell story, about a little man whose terminal cancer has the side-effect of making him a powerful telepath. “Revelations” and “All Souls” are two interlinked explorations of Christian mythology, and the like. Where some series might shy away from sequels, *The X-Files* has never been afraid to develop and return to peripheral characters and interesting stories that are not as popular as the conspiracy arc.

Perhaps the quality of *The X-Files* which is most admirable is its willingness to feature stories that threaten everything the audience has come to hold dear. In “Paper Hearts,” a fourth season story,

Mulder is faced with evidence that his sister, Samantha, was not abducted by either the government or aliens, but by a vicious serial killer who murdered her. The implicit suggestion of this story is that Mulder invented the alien abduction myth so as not to face the ugly truth about what *really* happened to Samantha. This is a brilliant story because it makes Mulder question his entire post-Samantha life. What if his whole adult life had been based on a lie? “Paper Hearts” forged that issue with narrative clarity and with many twists and turns.

“The Field Where I Died” is another brilliant *X-Files* installment which called many things into question, a reason, no doubt, it was despised by many fans and critics. In this well-written hour, a woman (brilliantly essayed by Kristen Cloke) reveals to Mulder that she and Mulder were soul-mates in a previous life. Mulder is fascinated by this revelation and undergoes a past-life hypnotic regression which seems to confirm her story. They were, and are, soul mates as they travel through life after life. The “kick” in this particular tale was that Cloke’s character also had a multiple personality disorder, which enabled Scully to dismiss her claims of reincarnation and past lives. “The Field Where I Died” is a great episode not only because it had the courage to flaunt the fans and establish that Mulder’s soul mate might *not* be Scully, but because it presented a fairly objective “either/or” scenario. Either Cloke’s character was crazy, or she was telling the truth about her past connection with Mulder. There was evidence to lead viewers either way.

Still, all of these “pluses” do not establish why *The X-Files* deserves its place as the best *horror* show of the thirtysomething series examined in this text. To make such a claim, one must look into the show’s extraordinary imagery. Quite simply, *The X-Files* has managed to generate more thrills than any TV series in history (with the possible exception of *Millennium*, Chris Carter’s other horror series) by taking ordinary situations and escalating them into terrifying ones. The examples are so numerous they could fill a book by themselves. In “Teso Dos Bichos,” there are two fine instances of pure terror. In the first, Mulder is walking in the forest with Scully when he notes that it is starting to rain again. He realizes he is wrong when he glances upward and sees that a human intestine has been strewn across a tree branch ... and is dripping blood down on his face. Later in the story, a long row of toilet lids in a dirty museum bathroom start to pop up and down as if of their own volition. After a moment of stark horror, it becomes obvious that each toilet bowl is not actually alive, but teeming with squirming rats and fetid brown water. Yuck!

This episode is so good that it is almost a perfect little horror film in and of itself. In “Teso Dos Bichos,” Mulder and Scully discover that a South American curse has caused the evil spirit of a jaguar to find its way into ordinary American cats. These cats then attack a museum, where a cursed artifact is being studied and examined, against the will of its people. The end of the episode features a spine-tingling descent into the museum’s basement (a modern day labyrinth), where the monsters await in darkness. Mulder and Scully venture downstairs, deeper and deeper, until they discover a room where all the victims have been laid out, their eyes gouged and apparently eaten by the cats. Before the viewer can take a breath, the cats attack ... jumping into the frame, scratching and bloodying Scully’s face (in tight close-up), pushing open doors, scratching through doors, howling with evil. This may not be the most intelligent *X-Files* ever, but it is certainly one of the scariest.

“The Host,” by Chris Carter, is another example of *The X-Files* at its absolute grisliest and scariest. In this installment, an unsuspecting man unknowingly swallows a mutant fluke worm, and then spits up pink bile while brushing his teeth. Getting sicker, the man (in the shower) vomits and the worm exits from his mouth ... circling down the drain into the shower, and finally disappearing. No description,



no words, can describe how harrowing this sequence is to watch. But, as Chris Carter is prone to do, his horror always has an ironic, almost humorous side. Later, the monstrous fluke-man, all grown up, hides inside an outhouse toilet! The camera focuses on the toilet, travels down into the bowl, descends through layers of darkness, and then finds, horribly, a white, pasty, half-human face with a circular mouth and a wrinkled, wormy body. The thought of this horrible thing existing at all is bad enough, but to imagine it lurking down there, beneath a toilet seat, adds a whole new level of perversion to the proceedings. Just imagine sitting down and having that thing bite you on the ass! Worse, imagine it pulling you down into the darkness with it.

“Detour” by Frank Spotnitz captures this same wacky combination of humor and horror. Early in the show, Mulder and Scully are on their way to an F.B.I. “team” workshop where they will have to work together to build a tower out of office furniture. At the climax of the episode, Mulder and Scully have a very different team-building experience. They find themselves in a dark hole inhabited by carnivorous moth-men with glowing, infrared eyes. To escape from the beasts, they build a tower, not of furniture, but of the moth men’s dead victims! Again, there’s a perverse delight behind the scenes here: the horror is tinged with irony and humor, yet scary nonetheless. More than anything, this mixture of the ironic with the horrific is the reason why *The X-Files* so consistently works.

Sometimes, the horror is more immediate, and not funny in the slightest. “Unruhe” is a creepy story in which a serial killer performs lobotomies on unsuspecting women with a blunt, sharp object which resembles an icepick. Operating without anesthesia, this sicko sticks the pick into the corners of the human eyes to quiet the “unrest” and strife he sees in the women all around him. “Unruhe” is the German word for such unrest, and the episode reaches a terrifying apex when Scully finds herself strapped down in a dental examination chair, next in line for the gruesome lobotomy treatment. Not only is the manner of violence incredibly disturbing, but so is the implication of what could happen to Dana Scully. If she is lobotomized, she will not be dead, she will be *worse* than dead ... lacking the sharp intelligence which makes her so special a character. “Unruhe” (by Vince Gilligan) captures a very real horror: the loss of identity. For Scully, it would be worse to be alive and lobotomized than dead. “Unruhe” is nightmare provoking because it subjects a wonderful individual to a terrifying situation which will remove all traces of individuality from that character.

*The X-Files* episode roster features story after story of startling horror. Each one is well-written, scary, thought-provoking, well-filmed, and beautifully performed. What an accomplishment! However, *The X-Files* has another success to its credit as well. It features not only scary stories, but it also features what may be the best, most horrifying episode of any TV show ever. The episode to which this writer refers is called “Home,” by Glen Morgan and James Wong, and it is the story of three mutant brothers who dwell in their isolated farmhouse with their limbless, crazed mother. The brothers Peacock not only chew their mother’s food for her, they also periodically *impregnate* her so that there will be more Peacocks to live with them. When a dead fetus is found near the imposing old Peacock place, Sheriff Andy Taylor calls in Scully and Mulder to investigate. What the F.B.I. agents find is a rotten, stinking house filled with booby traps, and four monsters who barely qualify as human beings. The wrecked farm house, where flies buzz incessantly and a layer of filth covers everything, is reminiscent of the Leatherface homestead in *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre* (1974) and the savage family dynamic seems like something out of early Wes Craven, *The Hills Have Eyes* (1977) perhaps.

What makes “Home” innovative rather than derivative, however, is the manner in which the episode sets up the unspoken “rules” of the town. The Peacocks do what they do, and the police do what they

do ... and each faction leaves the other alone. However, the arrival of the F.B.I. throws the “rules” out of synch, and the Peacocks respond with brutal force. In what may be the most frightening moment in genre television, the brothers Peacock, with baseball bats in hand, enter Sheriff Taylor’s house and beat him (and his wife) to death. Blood spreads across the floor in an ever-expanding pool as the “thwack” of the bats is heard repeatedly. This is a moment of pure menace, of evil captured as perfectly as any story in the visual medium ever has.

The brutal attack by the Peacocks sets up the suspense for the final act of the story, as Mulder, Scully, and Sebastian Spence (of *First Wave* [1999–]) must take down the Peacocks by entering their territory ... the dark old house. From a terrifying teaser, which commences with the birth of a new Peacock mutant, to the final moment, wherein two Peacocks escape the house of horrors and drive away to the tune of “Wonderful,” this episode is an exercise in sheer terror. “Home” fits beautifully with an ongoing *X-Files* theme (terror underneath the surface of so-called normal America) also seen in “Our Town” and “Die Hand der Verletzt,” and also manages to surpass the already high gross-out factor on the series. So effective is “Home” that it has only aired on American network television once. Banned from television, “Home” has finally been released on videocassette. Anybody who has seen it will *never* forget it. It represents terror TV at an apex of both style and substance.

There are so many other remarkable aspects of *The X-Files* worthy of lengthy discussion, but, alas, this book has other TV series to discuss as well. Suffice it to say that *The X-Files* has managed to develop its own visual style (a slow-moving camera which moves smoothly from a low angle, and nicely suggests the world has been “widened,” as if by Mulder and Scully’s extreme possibilities); it uses pop music effectively to buttress its story and heighten the creep factor (“Wonderful” in “Home”; “The Hokey Pokey” in “Chinga”; “Beyond the Sea” in “Beyond the Sea”). It has highlighted virtuoso, stylistic turns, as in Chris Carter’s “Triangle,” wherein a tracking camera moves through the whole show, with few or no cuts within scenes, and split screens pop up with regularity. Black and white homages (“Post-Modern Prometheus”), stories of intense paranoia set in remote, claustrophobic locations (“Ice,” “Firewalker,” “Darkness Falls”); horror tropes (the evil doll in “Chinga”), character shows (“Never Again”), parodies (“Jose Chung’s ‘*From Outer Space*’”), suspenseful action episodes (“Drive”), and even good old fashioned “get-inside-the-mind” of serial killer shows (“Grotesque”) are featured here too. Old monsters like the Golem (“Kaddish”), hellhounds (“Alpha”), vampires (“3”), werewolves (“Shapes”) and even giant insectoids (“Folie a Deux”) are revived and given new life on *The X-Files*. There may be no such thing as a perfect TV show, but *The X-Files* is quite simply as close as TV ever gets to that mark.

This author’s choices for the best *The X-Files* episodes are:

1. “Home”;
2. “Our Town”;
3. “The Host”;
4. “Paper Hearts”;
5. “Bad Blood”;
6. “Never Again”;
7. “Unruhe”;
8. “Folie a Deux”;
9. “Milagro”;
10. “War of the Coprophages.”

## CAST AND CREDITS

*Cast:* David Duchovny (Fox Mulder); Gillian Anderson (Dana Scully); Mitch Pileggi (Assistant Director Walter Skinner).

*Credits:* Created by: Chris Carter. Executive Producer: Chris Carter. Editors (various episodes): Jim Gross, Heather MacDougall, Stephen Mark, Casey O’Rohrs, Lynne Willingham. Directors of Photography (various episodes): John S. Bartley, Jon Joffin, Joel Ransom, Bill Roe. Co-Producers:

Paul Rabwin, Paul Barber, Larry Barber. *Supervising Producers*: Alex Gansa, Howard Gordon. *Co-Executive Producers*: James Wong, Glen Morgan, R.W. Goodwin. *Casting*: Rick Millikan. *Vancouver Casting*: Lynne Carrow. *Original Casting*: Randy Stone. *Music*: Mark Snow. *Art Director*: Graeme Murray. *Production Manager*: J.P. Finn. *First Assistant Director*: Brian Giddens. *Second Assistant Director*: Collin Leadley. *Visual Effects Producer*: Mat Beck. *Set Decorator*: Shirley Inget. *Assistant Art Director*: Gary P. Allen. *Script Supervisor*: Wendy McLean. *Costume Designer*: Larry Wells. *Assistant Costume Designer*: Jenni Gullett. *Property Master*: Ken Hawryliw. *Transportation Coordinator*: Bob Bowe. *Construction Coordinator*: Rob Water. *Hairstylist*: Malcolm Marsden. *Makeup*: Fern Levin. *Location Manager*: Todd Rittson. *Camera Operator*: Rod Pridy. *Focus Puller*: Marty McNally. *Production Coordinator*: Anita Truelove. *Chief Lighting Technician*: David Tickell. *Key Grip*: Al Campbell. *Special Effects*: David Gauthier. *Sound Mixer*: Michael Williamson. *Stunt Coordinator*: Ken Kirzinger. *Assistant Editor*: Jeff Cahn. *Postproduction Coordinator*: G.R. Potter. *Main Title Sequence designed by*: Castle/Bryant/Johnson. *Processing*: Gastown Film Labs. *Telecine*: Gastown Post and Transfer. *Electronic Assembly*: Encore Video. *Postproduction Sound*: West Productions, Inc. *Supervising Sound Editor*: Thierry Couturier. *Music Editor*: Jeff Charbonneau. From Ten Thirteen Productions, in association with 20th Century–Fox Television.

## EPISODE GUIDE

### • *First Season (1993–1994)*

**1. “Pilot”/“The X-Files”** Written by Chris Carter; Directed by Robert Mandel; airdate: September 10, 1993; *Guest Cast*: Charles Cioffi (F.B.I. Superior); Cliff De Young (Dr. Jay Nemen); Sarah Koskoff (Theresa Nemen); Leon Russom (Detective Miles); Peter Outerbridge; William B. Davis.

Recruited out of medical school, straight-arrow F.B.I. agent Dana Scully is assigned to work on the bureau’s “X Files,” a series of cases involving the unexplained, along with “Spooky” Fox Mulder, an Oxford-educated psychologist who believes that his sister was abducted by aliens years earlier. Although Mulder suspects that Scully has been sent to spy on him and debunk his work, he accepts her help on a new case: a series of disappearances and murders in the Collum National Forest in northwest Oregon. Four teens have disappeared there, and their corpses have been returned with strange markings on their backs. Although Scully is skeptical, Mulder suspects that alien abduction, a phenomenon related to abduction called “lost time,” a government conspiracy, and a paralyzed young boy all play a part in the mystery.

**2. “Deep Throat”** Written by Chris Carter; Directed by Daniel Sackheim; airdate: September 17, 1993; *Guest Cast*: Jerry Hardin (Deep Throat); Michael Bryan French (Paul Moessinger); Seth Green (Emil); Gabrielle Rose (Mrs. Budahas); Monica Parker (Ladonna); Sheila Moore (Veria McLennen); Lalainia Lindejerg (Zoe); Andrew Johnston (Lt. Col. Budahas); John Cuthbert (Commanding Officer); Vince Metcalfe (Kissel); Michael Puttonen (Motel Manager); Brian Furlong (Lead Officer); Doc Harris (Mr. McLennen).

The army has, for all practical purposes, kidnapped a pilot who has been testing an experimental military aircraft. Mulder’s interest in the case is spurred by his mysterious government contact, Deep Throat, who urges him not to interfere at this time. Mulder and a skeptical Scully make for Idaho to investigate, and learn that the pilot developed a rash and became unstable before his disappearance. They also learn that the pilot’s odd behavior may be caused by the physiological stress of flying an Aurora plane, a secret class of suborbital spycraft supposedly engineered from recovered U.F.O.

technology.

**3. “Squeeze”** Written by Glen Morgan and James Wong; Directed by Harry Longstreet; airdate: September 24, 1993; *Guest Cast*: Doug Hutchison (Victor Eugene Tooms); Donal Logue (Tom Colton); Henry Beckman (Frank Briggs); Kevin McNulty (Fuller); Terence Kelly (Usher); Colleen Winton (Examiner); James Bell (Detective Johnson); Gary Hetherington (Kennedy); Rob Morton (Kramer); Paul Noyce (Mr. Werner).

An old friend of Dana’s from her F.B.I. Academy days seeks the help of Scully and “Spooky” Mulder in solving a series of bizarre murders in Baltimore. An unknown killer is ripping out the livers of varied victims, but more mysteriously, there is no sign of entry at any of the crime scenes. Mulder realizes the murderer may be a long-lived assailant who committed identical crimes in Baltimore in 1903, 1933, and 1963. The culprit is a little man named Victor Eugene Tooms who can elongate his body and squeeze through tiny places (like six inch vents), and who eats human livers to maintain a mutant metabolism.

**4. “Conduit”** Written by Alex Gansa and Howard Gordon; Directed by Daniel Sackheim; airdate: October 1, 1993; *Guest Cast*: Carrie Snodgrass (Darlene Morris); Michael Cavanaugh (Sheriff); Don Gibb (Kip); Joel Palmer (Kevin Morris); Charles Cioffi (Section Chief Blevins); Don Thompson (NSA Agent Holtzman); Taunya Dee (Ruby Morris).

Mulder requests permission to investigate the abduction of a teenager named Ruby in Sioux City, and section chief Blevins thinks that Mulder is letting his own sister’s disappearance cloud his professional judgment. Scully persuades Blevins to allow the case to be investigated based on a connection Mulder establishes between Ruby and her mother, both abducted, apparently, near Lake Okobogee. Little Kevin Morris, who witnessed Ruby’s disappearance, also is affected: he is having nightmares, and seems to be in communication with the TV set. When the boy innocently writes down a top secret defense satellite code (in binary), Mulder believes that the boy has become a conduit between Earth and the force which took his sister.

**5. “The Jersey Devil”** Written by Chris Carter; Directed by Joe Napolitano; airdate: October 8, 1993; *Guest Cast*: Claire Stansfield (The Jersey Devil); Wayne Tippit (Detective Thompson); Gregory Sierra (Dr. Diamond); Michael MacRae (Ranger Brouillet); Jill Teed (Glenna); Tamsin Kelsey (Ellen); Andrew Airlie (Rod); Bill Dow (Dad); Hrothgar Matthews (Jack); Jayme Knox (Mom); Scott Swanson (First Officer); Sean O’Byrne (Second Officer); David Lewis (Young Officer); O’Neil Mark (SWAT Team Officer).

Near Atlantic City, NJ, a homeless man is found dead and partially devoured, and Mulder thinks the crime may involve the legendary creature known as the Jersey Devil, a man-beast like Big Foot. Over the objections of local police, Mulder searches for the supposedly mythical creature. After a sighting of a primitive, long-haired woman, Mulder ends up in the drunk tank and needs to be bailed out by Scully, who has a date with a divorcé. When a cavemanlike body is found in the woods, Mulder starts to believe that a wild family may be scavenging for food.

**6. “Shadows”** Written by Glen Morgan and James Wong; Directed by Michael Katleman; airdate: October 22, 1993; *Guest Cast*: Barry Primus (Mr. Dorlund); Lisa Waltz (Lauren Kite); Lorena Gale (Ellen Bledsoe); Veena Sood (Ms. Saunders); Deryl Hayes (Webster); Kelli Fox (Pathologist); Tom Pickett (Cop); Tom Heaton (Groundskeeper); Janie Woods-Morris (Ms. Lange); Nora McClellan (Jane

Morris); Anna Ferguson (Ms. Winn).

A young secretary in Philadelphia is protected by the ghost of her employer, who recently died in what has been declared a suicide. When the secretary is attacked at an ATM machine, Mulder and Scully are brought in to examine the corpses of her two attackers, and Mulder suspects they were killed by psychokinetic manipulations. At first, the deadly ghost interferes with Mulder and Scully's investigation, sabotaging their rental car, but when it becomes clear that they are intent on proving the truth, the ghost sets about to clear its name and point the finger at the man who murdered him.

**7. "Ghost in the Machine"** Written by Alex Gansa and Howard Gordon; Directed by Jerrold Freedman; airdate: October 29, 1993; *Guest Cast:* Jerry Hardin (Deep Throat); Rob La Belle (Brad Wilczek); Wayne Duvall (Jerry Lamana); Blu Mankuma (Claude Peterson); Tom Butler (Drake); Gillian Barber (Jane Spiller); Marc Baur (Man in Suit); Bill Finck (Sandwich Man); Theodore Thomas (Clyde).

The new head of Eurisko Industries makes a fatal error when he decides to terminate the C.O.S. Computer System which controls operations of the Eurisko corporate skyscraper. The C.O.S., a smart computer reminiscent of HAL in *2001: A Space Odyssey*, strikes back with deadly force, spurring an investigation by the F.B.I. and Mulder and Scully. The C.O.S. responds to the interference with counterpunches: hacking into Scully's computer and killing Mulder's former partner, Jerry Lamana. The only way to stop this deadly artificial intelligence involves the recruitment of its eccentric creator, a man who is fully aware of his creation's capability as a weapon, and his own role in history as a latter-day Oppenheimer.

*Note:* Eurisko means "I Discover" in Greek.

**8. "Ice"** Written by James Wong and Glen Morgan; Directed by David Nutter; airdate: November 5, 1993; *Guest Cast:* Xander Berkeley (Dr. Hodge); Felicity Huffman (Dr. DeSilva); Steve Hytner (Dr. Danny Murphy); Jeff Kober (Bear); Ken Krizinger (Richter); Sonny Suroweic (Campbell).

Something has gone terribly wrong for a government research team in the Arctic investigating the Earth's climate at human dawn and drilling deep into the ice sheets there. Mulder and Scully head to Alaska with a new team of scientists to discover what fate befell the first group. Once there, a dog infected with a strange parasitic organism bites the team pilot and starts the spread of the deadly life form. Scully and Mulder learn that an unknown extraterrestrial life form, almost microscopic in its larval stage, has been in the ice for 200,000 years and is totally inimical to human life.

**9. "Space"** Written by Chris Carter; Directed by William A. Graham; airdate: November 12, 1993; *Guest Cast:* Ed Lauter (Lt. Colonel Marcus Aurelius Belt); Susanna Thompson (Michelle Gennero); Tom McBeath (Scientist); Terry David Mulligan (Mission Controller); French Tickner (Preacher).

A much-decorated astronaut-turned-space program official is obsessed with the famous "face on Mars" monument and has several half-remembered memories of an alien encounter during one of his space walks. When sabotage on a shuttle mission is discovered at NASA, Mulder and Scully head to Mission Control in Houston to ferret out the culprit. The shuttle launch goes off without a hitch, but once into the voyage the shuttle breaks contact with mission control and all communication is silenced. Before long, something gray and enigmatic is hurling itself at the shuttle hull ... something which appears to be alive.

**10. "Fallen Angel"** Written by Howard Gordon and Alex Gansa; Directed by Larry Shaw; airdate: November 19, 1993; *Guest Cast:* Frederick Coffin (McGrath); Marshall Bell (Colonel Calvin Henderson); Scott Bellis (Max Fenig); Jerry Hardin (Deep Throat); Brent Stait (Corporal Taylor); Alvin Sanders (Deputy Sheriff J. Wright); Sheila Patterson (Gina Watkins); Tony Pantages (Lt. Fraser); Freda Perry (Mrs. Wright); Michael Rogers (Lt. Griffin); William McDonald (Dr. Oppenheim); Jane McDougall (Laura Dalton); Kimberly Unger (Karen Kovatz).

A UFO crashes near Townsend, Wisconsin, and the town is evacuated under false pretenses by the U.S. military retrieval team. Convinced a coverup is in progress, a rogue Mulder races to the scene to recover hard evidence of the downed extraterrestrial craft before it is gone forever. While snapping photographs at the crash site, Mulder is apprehended by the military operation and introduced to a fellow prisoner, a UFO buff and multiple abductee named Max Fenig. Meanwhile, a camouflaged, murderous entity stalks the nearby woods.

**11. "Eve"** Written by Kenneth Biller and Chris Brancato; Directed by Fred Gerber; airdate: December 10, 1993; *Guest Cast:* Harriet Harris Sansom (Dr. Sally Kendrick); Erika Krievins (Tina Simmons); Sabrina Krievins (Cindy Reardon); Jerry Hardin (Deep Throat).

In Greenwich, Connecticut, a man is found exsanguinated on his backyard swingset. He leaves behind a young daughter named Tina, and Mulder and Scully interview her to determine exactly what killed her father. A similar killing occurs in Marin County, California, and Mulder and Scully find an identical girl living there, this one named Cindy. The two girls are separated twins, and part of the second generation of a classified military eugenic experiment which was revived illegally by the mysterious Dr. Sally Kendrick at the Luther Stapes Center for Reproductive Medicine.

**12. "Fire"** Written by Chris Carter; Directed by Larry Shaw; airdate: December 17, 1993; *Guest Cast:* Amanda Pays (Phoebe Green); Mark Sheppard (Cecil Lively); Dan Lett (Sir Malcolm Marsden); Laurie Paton (Mrs. Marsden); Duncan Fraser (Beatty); Phil Hayes (Driver #1); Keegan Macintosh (Michael); Lynda Boyd (Woman in Bar); Christopher Gray (Jimmie); Alan Robertson (Grey-Haired Man).

Scotland Yard agent Phoebe Green, an old flame of Mulder's, seeks the help of the F.B.I. on a case in which someone is murdering British Parliament members by causing them to spontaneously combust. With Scully in tow, Mulder and Phoebe head to Cape Cod, Massachusetts, to protect the arsonist/killer's next target: Sir Malcolm Marsden and his family. Mulder and Phoebe attempt to lay a trap for the killer at a party in Boston, unaware that the arsonist is now masquerading as the family chauffeur.

**13. "Beyond the Sea"** Written by Glen Morgan and James Wong; Directed by David Nutter; airdate: January 7, 1994; *Guest Cast:* Brad Dourif (Luther Lee Boggs); Don Davis (Mr. Scully); Sheila Larken (Mrs. Scully); Lawrence King (Lucas Henry); Fred Henderson (Agent Thomas); Don Mackay (Warden Joseph Cash); Lisa Vultaggio (Liz Hawley); Chad Willett (Jim Summers); Kathryn Chisholm (Nurse); Randy Lee (Paramedic); Len Rose (E.R. Doctor).

As the holidays approach, Scully's father passes away unexpectedly from a massive coronary. On the work front, Scully and Mulder attempt to locate and rescue two kidnapped teens in Raleigh, North Carolina, by meeting with Luther Lee Boggs, a death row inmate who claims to have "psychic transmissions" regarding the kidnapping. Scully gives Boggs' claims of psychic ability special

credence in part because she feels vulnerable after her father's death, but also because he seems to have firsthand knowledge about her dad. When one of Boggs' channeling sessions proves fruitful on the case, Scully wants to pursue the lead even as a skeptical Mulder is warned by Boggs that his life is in danger under a "white cross."

**14. "Genderbender"** Written by Larry Barber and Paul Barber; Directed by Rob Bowman; airdate: January 21, 1994; *Guest Cast:* Brent Hinckley (Brother Andrew); Michele Goodger (Sister Abby); Nicholas Lea (Michael); Kate Twa and Peter Stebings (Brother Martin/Shapeshifter); Paul Batten (Brother Wilton).

In Germantown, Maryland, Mulder and Scully investigate the latest in a string of murders being committed by a killer who seems able to change sexes at will and transmit an irresistible human pheromone. Mulder traces the killer back to the Kindred, a strict religious sect in Massachusetts. The duo from the FBI goes north for further study and infiltrates the Kindred compound ... where the "simple" people seem to be immortal and absolutely incompatible with human beings (at least in a sexual sense). Scully is affected and aroused by Brother Andrew as Mulder gathers evidence which indicates that the Kindred are not of this Earth.

**15. "Lazarus"** Written by Alex Gansa and Howard Gordon; Directed by David Nutter; airdate: February 4, 1994; *Guest Cast:* Christopher Allport (Special Agent Jack Willis); Cec Verrel (Lula Phillips); Jackson Davies (Agent Bruskin); Jason Schombing (Warren James DuPres); Keith Rennie (Callum); Jay Brazeau (Professor Barnes).

Scully works a bank robbery with an old colleague and watches in horror as he is mortally wounded by the perpetrator. When he comes miraculously back to life on the operating table, however, Jack Willis's body is possessed by the spirit of the bank robber, DuPres. Now the evil man walks again in the body of a cop and is eager to reteam with his wife and accomplice, Lula. Mulder becomes convinced that a soul switch has indeed occurred in Willis, but Scully remains skeptical about it and goes out of her way to protect Jack ... a behavior which puts her life in danger.

**16. "Young at Heart"** Written by Scott Kaufer and Chris Carter; Directed by Michael Lange; airdate: February 11, 1994; *Guest Cast:* Dick Anthony Williams (Reggie Purdue); Alan Boyce (John Barnett); Christe Estabrook (Henderson); Graham Jarvis (Dr. Austin); Jerry Hardin (Deep Throat); Robin Mossley (Dr. Ridley); Merrilyn Gann (Prosecuting Attorney); Gordon Tipple (Joe Crandall); William B. Davis (CIA Agent); Courtney Arciaga (Young Child); David Peterson (Older Barnett); Robin Douglas (Computer Techie).

Mulder's first case in the bureau in 1989 involved an armed robber named John Barnett, a monster of a man responsible for several murders—some of which Mulder feels guilty about because he hesitated to take a shot at Barnett in a hostage situation. Though Barnett died in prison four years earlier, he appears to have returned from the grave to commit new crimes and taunt Mulder with his actions. Somehow, an illicit experiment conducted on inmates has revitalized Barnett and made him grow younger, as well as regenerated his amputated right hand. Mulder and Scully trace this experiment back to an unscrupulous doctor called Ridley, a man nicknamed Mengele for his ruthless pursuit of knowledge.

**17. "E.B.E."** Written by Glen Morgan and James Wong; Directed by William Graham; airdate: February 18, 1994; *Guest Cast:* Jerry Hardin (Deep Throat).

A trucker in Reagan, Tennessee, has a close encounter with a U.F.O. Scully and Mulder follow up on the sighting and encounter another example of “lost time.” They interview the truck driver, who claims to be a sick Gulf War veteran. Scully and Mulder consult with the Lone Gunmen, a bunch of conspiracy buffs who posit the existence of a dark shadow government working against the American people on everything from electronic surveillance devices (hidden in 20-dollar bills) to secret military aircraft based on U.F.O. technology.

*Note:* “E.B.E” is the episode which introduces the Lone Gunmen to the series. “E.B.E” is an acronym for Extraterrestrial Biological Entity.

**18. “Miracle Man”** Written by Howard Gordon and Chris Carter; Directed by Michael Lange; airdate: March 18, 1994; *Guest Cast:* R.D. Call (Sheriff Maurice Daniels); Scott Bairstow (Samuel Hartley); George Gerdes (Reverend Calvin Hartley); Dennis Lipscombe (Leonard Vance); Walter Marsh (Judge Hamish Purdy); Campbell Lane (Hohman’s Father); Chilton Crane (Margaret Hohman); Howard Storey (Fire Chief); Iris Quinn Bernard (Lillian Daniels); Lisa Ann Selby (Beatrice Salinger); Alex Dodak (Young Samuel); Roger Haskett (Deputy Tyson).

A faith healer named Samuel is charged with murder after the death of a woman he promised to heal with his touch. Scully and Mulder proceed to the Miracle Ministry in Kenwood, Tennessee, to investigate the crime. When they get there, they find that Samuel has disappeared and that the locals, led by the scarred Leonard Vance, have very strong religious convictions about permitting an autopsy on the dead woman. When Scully and Mulder find the boy with the miraculous touch, he claims that his pride and weakness were an invitation to the devil, and now his gift for good has been corrupted by evil. Mulder doesn’t believe the boy’s story until Samuel reveals that he knows all about Mulder’s pain ... including the disappearance of his sister, Samantha.

**19. “Shapes”** Written by Marilyn Osborn; Directed by David Nutter; airdate: April 1, 1994; *Guest Cast:* Ty Miller, Michael Horse, Donnelly Rhodes, Jimmy Herman, Renae Morriseau (Gwen Goodensnake); Dwight McFee (David Gates); Paul McLean (Dr. Joseph).

In Browning, Montana, Scully and Mulder investigate a mysterious shooting involving a land dispute between cattle owners and the Trego Indian reservation. Mulder uncovers an odd footprint at the crime scene and begins to suspect that the murdered Indian man was some kind of shapeshifter. His evidence is the original X-File, created by J. Edgar Hoover in 1946, which lists a series of animal-like killings in the area related to lycanthropy. When the savage murders continue, Mulder suspects that the werewolf or “manitou” bloodline has been passed on.

**20. “Darkness Falls”** Written by Chris Carter; Directed by Joe Napolitano; airdate: April 15, 1994; *Guest Cast:* Jason Beghe (Larry Moore); Tom O’Rourke (Steve Humphries); Titus Welliver (Doug Spinney); David Hay (Clean Suited Man); Barry Greene (Perkins); Ken Tremblett (Dyer).

In Washington state, thirty lumberjacks have vanished, as have several eco-terrorists attempting to preserve trees in the area. Mulder pulls some strings to be assigned to the investigation, believing it to be related to a case from 1934 in which a WPA work crew in the same forest disappeared without a trace. The truth turns out to be stranger than fiction in this case: flesh-eating insects have been released from an ancient tree, recently cut down, and are swarming and devouring humans by night. The only thing to hold these carnivorous insects at bay is light, but Scully and Mulder, in an isolated cabin far from help, soon realize their power generator will not last until the dawn.



**21. “Tooms”** Written by Glen Morgan and James Wong; Directed by David Nutter; airdate: April 22, 1994; *Guest Cast*: Doug Hutchison (Victor Eugene Tooms); Paul Ben Victor (Dr. Monte); Henry Beckman (Frank Briggs); William B. Davis (Cigarette Smoking Man); Timothy Webber (Detective Talbot); Jan D’Arcy (Judge Kann); Jerry Wasserman (Detective Plith); Frank C. Turner (Doctor Collins); Gillian Carfra (Christine Ranford); Pat Bernal (Frank Ranford); Mikal Dighi (Dr. Karetzky); Glynis Davies (Nelson); Steve Adams (Myers); Catherine Lough (Dr. Richmond); Andre Daniels (Arlan Green).

Mulder attends a hearing to determine if Victor Eugene Tooms, the liver-eating mutant of Baltimore with the ability to stretch his musculature, should be released from psychiatric care. The court fails to believe Mulder’s evidence of a long-lived serial killer who eats human livers and hibernates for thirty years, and it releases Tooms at the same time that Scully is pressured by Skinner and the mysterious Cigarette Smoking Man to adopt more conventional modes of investigation. While Mulder tracks a free-ranging Tooms, Scully consults with Detective Briggs, the man who investigated the Tooms/Powhatan Mill killings in 1933. Scully discovers a body hidden in the cement foundation of a building built in 1933 and suspects Tooms hid it there, while Mulder is stalked on surveillance by his own prey.

**22. “Born Again”** Written by Howard Gordon and Alex Gansa; Directed by Jerrold Freedman; airdate: April 29, 1994; *Guest Cast*: Brian Markinson (Tony Fiore); Mimi Lieber (Anita Fiore); Maggie Wheeler (Sharon); Dey Young (Mrs. Bishop); Andrea Libman (Michelle Bishop); P. Lynn Johnson (Dr. Braun); Dwight Koss (Detective Barballa).

A strange little girl mysteriously shows up at a police station in New York City, and before long the detective who interviews her is discovered dead, having fallen—or been pushed—out of a window. Mulder and Scully look into the matter and discover that the child, Michelle, made her way from Buffalo to the city with no memory of the journey. Mulder visits Michelle’s psychologist and soon learns that the girl seems to be experiencing past-life memories of a police officer who was murdered the day she was born, eight years ago. Before long, the two F.B.I. agent have uncovered evidence of reincarnation, as well as a thirst for justice that reaches from beyond the grave.

**23. “Roland”** Written by Chris Ruppenthal; Directed by David Nutter; airdate: May 6, 1994; *Guest Cast*: Zeljko Ivanek (Roland Fuller); Nicole Mercurio (Mrs. Stodie); Kerry Sandomirsky (Tracy); Garry Davey (Keats); James Sloyan (Dr. Frank Nowlett); Matthew Walker (Surnow); Dave Hurtubise (Barrington); Sue Mathew (Lisa Dole).

Two scientists, Grable and Surnow, have died in six months at the top secret Project Icarus at Mahan Propulsion Laboratory while working on a project which could double supersonic speed while using half the fuel. Mulder and Scully investigate the deaths and meet Roland Fuller, the project’s mentally retarded janitor, who seems to have murdered Surnow by trapping him in a wind tunnel. When there is another gruesome murder, again seemingly orchestrated by Roland, Mulder suspects an unusual link between the janitor and Dr. Grable. That notion is confirmed when it is discovered that Grable and Roland are twins, and that Grable’s head is still alive, suspended in cryogenic freeze at the Avalon Foundation.

**24. “The Erlenmeyer Flask”** Written by Chris Carter; Directed by R.W. Goodwin; airdate: May 13, 1994; *Guest Cast*: Jerry Hardin (Deep Throat); William B. Davis (Cigarette Smoking Man); Lindsey Ginter (Assassin); Anne De Salvo (Dr. Ann Carpenter); Simon Webb, Jim Leard (Captain Lacerio);

Ken Kramer.

On May 8, 1994, Deep Throat suggests that Mulder take a closer look at a police chase in Maryland which ended in an extremely strong suspect jumping into the water after incapacitating several police officers. Peering further into this unusual situation, Mulder and Scully trace the suspect's car, a silver Sierra, to a laboratory at EmGen where some kind of human gene experiment is being conducted. Dr. Benrube, the project scientist, mysteriously ends up dead and Mulder and Scully realize they are seeing the pieces of a larger, shadowy conspiracy. An ancient bacteria which existed before man walked the Earth and a strange warehouse filled with apparently human/alien hybrids are ingredients of this puzzle, which culminates in the closing down of the X-Files.

• *Second Season (1994–1995)*

**25. “Little Green Men”** Written by Glen Morgan and James Wong; Directed by David Nutter; airdate: September 16, 1994; *Guest Cast:* Mike Gomez (Horjhe); Raymond J. Barry (Senator Richard Matheson); William B. Davis (Cigarette Smoking Man); Les Carlson (Dr. Trotsky); Marcus Turner (Young Mulder); Vanessa Morley (Samantha); Fulvio Cecere (Aide); Deryl Hayes (Agent Morris); Dwight McFee (Commander); Lisa Anne Selby (Student); Gary Hetherington (Lewin); Bob Wilde (Rand).

The X-Files have been shut down, and Scully and Mulder reassigned (to teaching and wiretap duties, respectively). Mulder experiences a crisis of faith about his lack of evidence concerning extraterrestrial life, even as he recalls in detail the night in 1973 when his sister, Samantha, was abducted by aliens. Mulder's enthusiasm is rekindled, however, when there is a chance to make contact with aliens at the satellite installation at Arecibo in Puerto Rico. Scully tracks Mulder down, but she is not alone ... agents of the conspiracy are also concerned over his whereabouts.

**26. “The Host”** Written by Chris Carter; Directed by Daniel Sackheim; airdate: September 23, 1994; *Guest Cast:* Darin Morgan, Matthew Bennett, Freddy Andreiucci, Don MacKay, Hrothgar Matthews, Ron Sauve, Raoul Ganev.

With the X-Files still officially shut down, Mulder is asked to look into a bizarre murder case in Newark, NJ, with distinct “X-file” overtones. Men are being murdered in the sewers by what Mulder believes is a giant fluke worm. The creature, part parasite and part man, seems to have swum into New Jersey from a Russian ship which was disposing of waste materials and sewage from Chernobyl. When the beast escapes capture, Scully has some alarming news for Mulder: the creature may be trying to reproduce, a process which involves a warm human body for the fluke's young to incubate inside.

**27. “Blood”** Written by Glen Morgan and James Wong; Story by Darin Morgan; Directed by David Nutter; airdate: September 30, 1994; *Guest Cast:* William Sanderson (Ed Funch); John Cygar, Kimberly Ashlyn Gere (Mrs. Roberts); George Toliatos (Larry Winters); Tom Braidwood, Bruce Harwood, Dean Haglund (The Lone Gunmen); Gerry Rousseau (Mechanic); Andre Daniels (Harry); Diana Stevan (Mrs. Adams); William Mackenzie (Bus Driver); David Fredericks (Security Guard); Kathleen Duborg (Mother); John Harris (Taber); B.J. Harrison (Clerk).

In Franklin, PA, normal citizens inexplicably become spree killers as a result of murderous directions given them by electronic devices such as cellular phones, ATMs, and fax machines. Scully conducts an autopsy on one of the killers and finds that the perpetrator underwent adrenal hemorrhage and

intense phobic behavior, possibly caused by the presence of an undetermined compound similar in its effect to LSD. The Lone Gunmen recognize the substance as Lysergic Dimethren, or LSDM, a dangerous insecticide which creates a fear response in those affected by it. While investigating the possibility that some government agency may be secretly spraying the insecticide, Mulder is compromised by a helicopter flyby.

**28. "Sleepless"** Written by Howard Gordon; Directed by Rob Bowman; airdate: October 7, 1994; *Guest Cast:* Tony Todd (Augustus "Preacher" Cole); Nicholas Lea (Alex Krycek); Jonathan Gries, Steven Williams (X); David Thompson (Henry Willig); David Adams (Dr. Girardi); Michael Puttonen (Dr. Pilsson); Anna Hagar (Dr. Charyn); William B. Davis (Cigarette Smoking Man); Mitch Kosterman (Detective Morton); Paul Bittante (Team Leader); Claude De Martino (Dr. Grissom).

In Connecticut, a pioneer in sleep disorder research dies mysteriously in his apartment while apparently dreaming that he is trapped in a deadly fire. With a new partner, Alex Krycek, Mulder investigates Dr. Grissom's death. After investigating a dream clinic and hearing Scully's postautopsy explanation that Grissom's body believed it was burning, Mulder suspects a culprit who can manipulate the dreams of others. Meanwhile, Mulder meets with the mysterious X, his new contact and Deep Throat's successor.

**29. "Duane Barry"** Written and directed by Chris Carter; airdate: October 14, 1994; *Guest Cast:* Steve Railsback (Duane Barry); Nicholas Lea (Alex Krycek); C.C.H. Pounder (Agent Cassan); Stephen E. Miller (Tactical Commander); Frank C. Turner (Dr. Hakkie); Fred Henderson (Agent Rich); Barbara Pollard (Gwen); Sarah Strange (Kimberly); Robert Lewis (Officer); Michael Dobson (Marksman #2); Tosca Baggoo (Clerk); Tim Dixon (Bob); Prince Maryland (Agent Janus); John Sampson (Marksman #1).

In downtown Richmond in August of 1994, escaped mental patient Duane Barry holds a travel office and his psychiatrist captive. Mulder is brought in as a hostage negotiator because Barry believes that he has been abducted by aliens multiple times. To free the hostages, Mulder must dig deep into Barry's recollection of being taken from his bed and experimented upon by both gray aliens and black-suited government agents. Barry is eventually apprehended, but he escapes capture again and kidnaps Scully, dragging her to the mountaintop where she will have a rendezvous with destiny ... and aliens?

**30. "Ascension"** Written by Paul Brown; Directed by Michael Lange; airdate: October 21, 1994; *Guest Cast:* Steve Railsback (Duane Barry); Nicholas Lea (Alex Krycek); Steven Williams (X); William B. Davis (Cigarette Smoking Man); Sheila Larken (Mrs. Scully); Meredith Bain Woodward (Slaughter); Peter LaCroix (Dwight); Steve Makaj (Patrolman); Bobby L. Stewart (Deputy).

Scully has been kidnapped by the insane Duane Barry, who presumably is taking her to be abducted by aliens! Mulder races to find Scully, only to come up against Krycek, his new partner and a dangerous turncoat. Krycek and Mulder fight it out on a cable car at Skyland Mountain, the location where Scully has been taken. At the end of the day, Scully is gone, missing in action, and the X-Files are reopened.

**31. "3"** Written by Chris Ruppenthal, Glen Morgan, and James Wong; Directed by David Nutter; airdate: November 4, 1994; *Guest Cast:* Justina Vail (The Unholy Spirit); Perrey Reeves (Kristin Kilar); Frank Military (John); Tom McBeath (Detective Gwynn); Malcolm Stewart (Commander Carver); Frank Ferrucci (Detective Nettles); Ken Kramer (Dr. Browning); Roger Allford (Garrett

Lorre); Richard Yee (David Wong); Brad Loree (Fireman); Gustavo Moreno (Father); John Tierney (Dr. Jacobs); David Livingston (Guard).

With Scully still missing following her abduction, Mulder flies out to Los Angeles during an especially dry season to investigate a murder in which the victim has been bitten and drained of blood. Mulder suspects a trio of modern-day vampires known as “The Trinity” may be responsible, and he stakes out the Hollywood Blood Bank in hopes that an employee there, the night watchman, may be one of the criminals. Mulder captures one of the killers, a man who insists he is a vampire and can live forever, but he burns up when exposed to the sunlight. Mulder then meets a dark and mysterious woman with a thirst for blood at the appropriately named Club Tepes.

**32. “One Breath”** Written by Glen Morgan and James Wong; Directed by R.W. Goodwin; airdate: November 11, 1994; *Guest Cast:* Sheila Larken (Mrs. Scully); Melinda McGraw (Melissa Scully); Steven Williams (X); William B. Davis (Cigarette Smoking Man); Don Davis (Admiral Scully); Jay Brazeau (Dr. Daly); Nicola Cavendish (Nurse Owens); Lorena Gale (Nurse Wilkins); Bruce Harwood, Dean Haglund, Tom Braidwood (The Lone Gunmen); Ryan Michael (Overcoat Man); Tegan Moss (Young Dana Scully).

Scully miraculously appears at a local hospital, barely alive and in a coma. Mulder and the Lone Gunmen try to determine what has happened to her, while Dana is tended to by a mysterious caregiver, Nurse Owens. A shadowy government agent attempts to steal a tube of Scully’s blood and Mulder is unable to capture him when intercepted in the garage by his new informant, X. A despondent Mulder, convinced Scully will soon die, confronts the Cigarette Smoking Man and puts a gun to his head.

**33. “Firewalker”** Written by Howard Gordon; Directed by David Nutter; airdate: November 18, 1994; *Guest Cast:* Bradley Whitford (Dr. Daniel Trepkose); Leland Orser (Jason Ludwig, Robotics Engineer); Shawnee Smith (Jesse O’Neil); Tuck Milligan (Dr. Pierce); Hiro Kanagawa (Tanaka); David Lewis (Vosberg); Torben Rolfen (Technician).

A team of scientists exploring a live volcano issue a video distress call soon after activating Firewalker, a robot device which can descend to the floor of a volcano and bring back specimens as well as video transmissions of its progress. Scully and Mulder are recruited by a scientist to investigate the mysterious crisis in the Cascade Mountain range. What they find is astonishing: evidence of a strange life-form which lives inside the heat of a live volcano and erupts out of the throats of living human hosts. This silicon-based life-form, a fungus, can perpetuate itself and infect others via airborne spores, and Mulder and Scully find themselves in danger of being compromised.

**34. “Red Museum”** Written by Chris Carter; Directed by Win Phelps; airdate: December 9, 1994; *Guest Cast:* Paul Sands (Jerry Thomas); Steve Eastin (Sheriff); Mark Rolston (Richard Odin); Lindsey Ginter (Assassin); Gillian Barber (Beth Kane); Bob Frazer (Gary Kane); Robert Clothier (Old Man); Elizabeth Rosen (Katie); Crystal Verge (Woman Reading Words); Camerone Labine (Rick); Tony Sampson (Brad); Gerry Nairn (1st Man); Brian McGugan (1st Officer).

Near Delta Glen, Wisconsin, teens are being abducted by night and returned to town the following morning with the legend “HE IS ONE” scrawled in black marker on their backs. Local authorities suspect that the Church of the Red Museum, a bizarre, New Age vegetarian religious order led by a man called Odin, is responsible, but Mulder and Scully find evidence leading to a different conclusion. They believe that there is a secret government experiment being conducted on the

abducted youths, experiments involving a dangerous growth hormone. Also found in the dangerous innoculent is an unidentified amino acid which may be extraterrestrial in source.

*Note:* This is the episode that was intended to be a cross-over with the popular CBS David Kelley series *Picket Fences*, which also takes place in Wisconsin.

**35. “Excelsius Dei”** Written by Paul Brown; Directed by Stephen Surjik; airdate: December 16, 1994; *Guest Cast:* Teryl Kothery, Sab Shimono (Gung); Eric Christmas, David Fresco, Sheila Moore (Mrs. Dawson); Jerry Wasserman (Dr. Grago); Tasha Simms (Laura); John Cuthbert (Tiernan); Paul Jarrett (Upshaw); Ernie Prentice (Leo).

At the Excelsius Dei Convalescent Home in Worcester, Massachusetts, an invisible psychic force strikes back against the negligent staff. A nurse is raped by what she claims is one of the elderly residents of the home. Scully and Mulder visit the nursing home and interview the staff doctor, who is using an experimental drug to treat the residents’ Alzheimer’s disease. When Scully determines that the treatment could not possibly be generating such results, she and Mulder look to the home’s Asian orderly, a man who is growing special mushrooms with dangerous telepathic properties.

**36. “Aubrey”** Written by Sara Charno; Directed by Rob Bowman; airdate: January 6, 1995; *Guest Cast:* Terry O’Quinn (Detective Tillman); Deborah Strang (B.J. Morrow); Morgan Woodward (Harry Cokely); Joy Coghill (Linda Tibideau); Robyn Driscoll (Detective Joe Darnell); Peter Fleming (Officer #1); Sarah Jane Redmond (“Young Man”); Emmanuel Hajeck (Young Cokely).

In 1942, F.B.I. profiler Sam Cheney disappeared near Aubrey, Missouri. In 1994, Detective B.J. Morrow discovers his remains after having a strange vision. Mulder and Scully investigate Cheney’s death, which may be related to a 1940s serial killer known as “The Slash Killer.” As Mulder and Scully dig deeper, they realize that B.J.’s clairvoyant experience may be a result of a heretofore unknown genetic connection to the killer of half-a-century ago.

**37. “Irresistible”** Written by Chris Carter; Directed by David Nutter; airdate: January 13, 1995; *Guest Cast:* Bruce Weitz (Agent Box); Nick Chinland (Donnie FASTER); Deana Milligan (Satin); Robert Thurston (Toews); Glynis Davies (Ellen); Christine Willes (Karen Kasseff); Tim Progosh (Mr. Flebling); Dwight McFee (Suspect); Denalda Williams (Marilyn); Maggie O’Hara (Young Woman); Kathleen Duborg (Prostitute); Mark Saunders (Agent Bush); Ciara Hunter (Co-ed).

In Minneapolis, a fetishist is collecting the hair and fingernails of female corpses, and Mulder and Scully are brought in on the case. Scully is especially unnerved by the desecration of the dead in this scenario, and Mulder fears the stalker may escalate to murder. When the fetishist gets a job as a delivery man, he has access to new victims ... and a thirst to kill. The fetishist then sets his sights on Agent Scully.

**38. “Die Hand der Verletzt”** Written by Glen Morgan and James Wong; Directed by Kim Manners; airdate: January 27, 1995; *Guest Cast:* Dan Butler (Jim Osprey); Susan Blommaert (Phyllis Paddock); Heather McComb (Shannon); P. Lynn Johnson (Deborah); Shawn Johnston (Pete); Travis MacDonald (Mr. Duran); Michelle Goodger (Barbara Osprey); Larry Musser (Sheriff Oakes); Franky Czinege (Jerry); Laura Harris (Andrea); Doug Abrahams (Paul Vitaris).

Mulder and Scully investigate the unusual death of a popular high school student, and Mulder comes

to believe the murder may be cult-related. The school board in the sleepy little town consists of satanists, and soon an evil substitute teacher, Ms. Phyllis Paddock, arrives to wreak havoc. A teenage girl claims to have participated in black masses in her cellar and to have performed as a “breeder” for the satanist cult. Mulder and Scully find no evidence to substantiate the report, but even they begin to feel the hand of the devil at work, through the frightening Ms. Paddock.

**39. “Fresh Bones”** Written by Howard Gordon; Directed by Rob Bowman; airdate: February 3, 1995; *Guest Cast:* Daniel Benzali (Coloney Wharton); Steven Williams (X); Bruce Young, Jamil Walker Smith, Matt Hill, Callum Keith Rennie, Kevin Conway, Katya Gardner, Roger Cross.

Two marines have died at a Haitian refugee processing camp in Folkstone, N.C., and the wife of one dead man believes voodoo is behind both apparent suicides. Mulder and Scully search for the truth of the matter at the camp, just after a voodoo-fueled riot in which a young boy named Chester has lost his life. A voodoo priest, an incarcerated Haitian revolutionary who professes a knowledge of zombification, warns Scully and Mulder that they are in jeopardy. Soon, Mulder and Scully have a close encounter with the so-called living dead when one of the marines, believed dead, shows up miraculously alive ... to commit murder.

**40. “Colony”** Written by Chris Carter; From a story by David Duchovny and Chris Carter; Directed by Nick Marck; airdate: February 10, 1995; *Guest Cast:* Peter Donat (Bill Mulder); Brian Thompson (Alien Bounty Hunter); Megan Leitch (Samantha Mulder); Dana Gladstone (Clone Doctor); Tom Butler (Ambrose Chappell); Tim Henry (Federal Marshal); Andrew Johnston (Agent Weiss); Rebecca Toolan (Mrs. Mulder); Ken Roberts (Motel Proprietor); Michael Rogers (First Crewman); Oliver Becker (2nd Doctor); James Leard (Sgt. Al Dixon); Linden Banks (Reverend Sistrank); Bonnie Hay (Field Doctor); Kim Restell (Newspaper Clerk); Richard Sargent (Captain); David L. Gordon (F.B.I. Agent).

An alien flying saucer crashes in the ocean and deposits a deadly extraterrestrial bounty hunter on Earth. This inhuman shapeshifter’s mission: to eliminate (i.e., murder) the participants (alien/human hybrids and clones) and destroy all progress on and evidence of the top secret alien/man hybridization project first uncovered with the help of Deep Throat in May of 1994. Mulder and Scully race to keep the clones alive, in hopes of learning more, and Mulder meets one woman among the targets who claims to be his long-lost sister, Samantha. But the bounty hunter is one step ahead.

**41. “End Game”** Written by Frank Spotnitz; Directed by Rob Bowman; airdate: February 17, 1995; *Guest Cast:* Steven Williams (X); Peter Donat (Bill Mulder); Brian Thompson (Bounty Hunter); Megan Leitch (Samantha); Rebecca Toolan (Mrs. Mulder); Andrew Johnston (Agent Weiss), Colin Cunningham (Lt. Wilson); Bonnie Hay, Beatrice Zellinger, J.B. Bivens, Allan Lysell.

A U.S. nuclear submarine, *Allegiance*, is immobilized in the Arctic by what is believed to be a UFO. Meanwhile, Scully grapples with the shapeshifter who is after the woman who claims to be Samantha, Mulder’s sister. A trade, Scully for Samantha, is arranged with deadly results. A vengeance-thirsty Mulder then pursues the bounty hunter back to his vessel in the Arctic.

**42. “Fearful Symmetry”** Written by Steve De Jarnatt; Directed by James Whitmore Jr.; airdate: February 24, 1995; *Guest Cast:* Jayne Atkinson (Willa Ambrose); Lance Guest (Kyle Lang); Jack Rader (Ed Meacham); Bruce Harwood (Byers); Tom Braidwood (Frohike); Charles Andre (Ray Floyd); Joy St. Michael (Sophie).

In Idaho, a stampeding, invisible elephant wreaks havoc, crushing a construction worker to death and then miraculously becoming visible on a foggy street sometime later. Scully and Mulder look into the matter, wondering how an animal could free itself from a locked cage and leave the zoo without being detected. The FBI duo sees signs of a political struggle at the Fairfield Zoo between the new zoo-keeper, Willa Ambrose, and her predecessor, Ed Meacham, as well as difficulties with the WAO, an organization dedicated to freeing caged animals. As the case becomes more complex, the specter of alien abduction is raised, and the next victim may be a pregnant gorilla named Sophie who has a sign language vocabulary of 1,000 words.

**43. “Dod Kalm”** Written by Howard Gordon and Alex Gansa; From a story by Howard Gordon; Directed by Rob Bowman; airdate: March 10, 1995; *Guest Cast:* John Savage (Trondheim); Dmitry Chepovetsky (Lt. Harper); David Cubitt (Captain Barclay); Vladimir Kulich (Olafsson); Mar Anderson (Halverson); Stephen Dimopoulos (Ionesco); Claire Riley (Dr. Laskos).

A naval destroyer disappears in the Norwegian Sea, but several survivors have returned to shore ... all prematurely aged. Mulder thinks the escapees and the ship itself passed through a wrinkle in time like the Bermuda Triangle, and he and Scully charter a ship to take them to the destroyer’s last known location at sea. Once aboard the *Ardent*, however, their charter ship flees and Mulder and Scully are stranded at sea aboard a ship rapidly rusting beneath them. To make matters worse, the hyperaccelerated aging also begins to take effect on the two agents.

**44. “Humbug”** Written by Darin Morgan; Directed by Kim Manners; airdate: March 31, 1995; *Guest Cast:* Jim Rose (Dr. Blockhead); Wayne Grace (Sheriff Hamilton/Jim-Jim the Dog-Faced Boy); Michael Anderson (Mr. Nutt); Vincent Schiavelli (Lanny); The Enigma (Conundrum Geek); Alex Diakun (Curator); John Payne (Jerald Glazebrook); Gordon Tipple (Hepcat Helm); Alvin Law (Reverend).

Mulder and Scully explore the facets of a bizarre case in Gibsontown, Florida, where an escape artist known as the Alligator Man has been murdered by a strange creature. The F.B.I. agents fear that one of the town’s inhabitants, all sideshow freaks, may be a vicious serial killer, but Mulder soon adapts his theory to include the activity of a half simian, half fish monster called the Fiji Mermaid. As the murders continue, Mulder and Scully familiarize themselves with various townspeople including Lanny and his malformed twin Leonard, Dr. Blockhead, a “Body Manipulator,” and the fish-eating freak known as the Conundrum Geek. The town’s secrets soon slip away, and Mulder and Scully get closer to the truth when they realize that a conjoined twin may also be a disjointed twin.

*Note:* This is the infamous episode in which Gillian Anderson eats an insect on-screen. Although she later denied she had actually consumed the bug, this nonetheless quickly become a trademark “cult” moment for *X-Files* fans.

**45. “The Calusari”** Written by Sara B. Charno; Directed by Michael Vejar; airdate: April 14, 1995; *Guest Cast:* Helene Clarkson (Maggie Holvey); Joel Palmer (Michael/Charlie Holvey); Lilyan Chauvin (Golda); Kay E. Kuter (Head Calusari); Ric Reid (Steve Holvey); Christine Willes (Karen Kosseff, L.C.S.W.); Bill Dow (Chuck Burk); Jacqueline Dandeneau (Nurse Castor); Bill Croft (Calusari #2); Campbell Lane (Calusari #3); George Josef (Calusari #4).

Mulder believes that a ghost is responsible for the death of a two-year old Romanian boy at an amusement park in Maryland. The boy’s older brother, Charlie, has a swastika, an ancient symbol of

good luck, drawn on his hand and Scully believes that she and Mulder are looking at a case of Munchausen-by-Proxy perpetrated by a superstitious grandmother from the old country. Soon Charlie's father is dead under mysterious circumstances, and so is the ethnic grandmother. The Romanian Calusari, versed in the old ways, attempts to save Charlie from the evil spirit of his stillborn twin, Michael, who seems to be causing the world of the dead to follow Charlie in life.

**46. "F. Emasculata"** Written by Chris Carter and Howard Gordon; Directed by Rob Bowman; airdate: April 28, 1995; *Guest Cast:* Charles Martin Smith (Dr. Osborne); Dean Norris (U.S. Marshal); John Pyper-Ferguson (Paul); William B. Davis (Cigarette Smoking Man); Angelo Vacco (Garza); Morris Manych (Doctor); John Tench (Steve).

After a scientist named Torrence is killed by a virulent disease in South America, a package is sent to a prisoner in jail in Dinwiddie, Virginia. Inside is a diseased animal leg which soon causes the spread of the deadly disease inside the installation. When two murder convicts escape from prison carrying the contamination, Mulder and Scully must track down the fugitives and prevent further spread of the terminal illness. Scully uncovers evidence that the government and a large pharmaceutical company engineered this "test" as part of some secret operation, but Mulder's first order of business is to catch the last surviving fugitive before he contaminates a busload of innocent people.

**47. "Soft Light"** Written by Vince Gilligan; Directed by James Contner; airdate: May 5, 1995; *Guest Cast:* Tony Shalhoub (Dr. Chester R. Banton); Kate Twa (Kelly Ryan); Kevin McNulty (Christopher Davie); Steven Williams (X); Nathaniel Deveaux (Detective); Robert Rozen (Doctor); Donna Yamamoto (Night Nurse); Forbes Angus (Government Scientist); Guyle Frazier (Officer #1); Steve Bacic (Officer #2); Craig Brunanski (Security Guard).

In Richmond, Virginia, Scully and Mulder assist Scully's detective friend and former student, Kelly Ryan, solve a bizarre homicide case in which the victims end up as scorch-marks on the floor. At first, Mulder suspects spontaneous human combustion, but a train station video leads the investigators to Polarity Magnetics employee, physicist Dr. Banton, who was experimenting with dark matter, neutrinos, quarks, and the like—the very building blocks of the universe. Banton was in an accident in a particle accelerator which changed the very nature of his existence and rendered his shadow deadly. Now Mulder and Scully must help the doctor before his dark matter shadow zaps another human being into oblivion.

**48. "Our Town"** Written by Frank Spotnitz; directed by Rob Bowman; airdate: May 12, 1995; *Guest Cast:* John Milford (Walter Chaco); Gary Grubbs (Sheriff Arens); Timothy Webber (Jess Harold); Caroline Kava (Doris Kearns); John MacLaren (George Kearns); Robin Mossley (Dr. Vance Randolph); Gabrielle Miller (Paula); Hrothgar Mathews (Mental Patient); Robert Moloney (Worker); Carrie Cain Sparks (Maid).

Eighty-seven people have disappeared in or around the town of Dudley, Arkansas, and "Foxfire" and "witchespeg" have been blamed for the crimes. Scully and Mulder's investigation leads them to the Chaco Chicken Processing Plant where one health inspector, George Kearns, has vanished. Mulder soon theorizes that the good people of Dudley are feeding not just on chicken, but on unwelcome outsiders as well ... as part of some cannibalistic ritual designed to prolong life. As the facts of this case become evident, Mulder learns the Chaco Chicken secret, and Scully is nearly served up at a town "barbecue" in the woods.



**49. “Anasazi”** Written by Chris Carter; From a story by David Duchovny and Chris Carter; Directed by R.W. Goodwin; airdate: May 19, 1995; *Guest Cast*: Peter Donat (Bill Mulder); Floyd “Red Crow” Westerman (Albert); Nicholas Lea (Krycek); William B. Davis (Cigarette Smoking Man); Michael David Simms (Senior F.B.I. Agent); Renae Morrissette (Josephine Doane); Ken Camroux (2nd Senior Agent); Dakota House (Eric); Bernie Coulson (The Thinker); Bruce Harwood, Dean Haglund (The Lone Gunmen); Mitchell Davies (Stealth Man); Pal McLean (Agent).

In the land of the Navajo, the Earth has a secret it needs told: a train car is unearthed in the desert—a train car containing the bodies of strange creatures which appear to be extraterrestrial in origin. Meanwhile, Mulder meets with a fugitive computer hacker called “The Thinker” who has stolen a copy of the department of defense’s UFO intelligence file. Unfortunately, the file is encrypted in Navajo and requires translation ... but Mulder is in no frame of mind to go further because his water supply is being tampered with and he is growing increasingly violent and irrational. When Mulder’s father is murdered, Fox is the prime suspect, and Scully works to clear both his name and his head.

*Note*: The word “Anasazi” refers to an Indian tribe that vanished without a trace some 600 years ago.

• *Third Season (1995–1996)*

**50. “The Blessing Way”** Written by Chris Carter; Directed by R.W. Goodwin; airdate: September 22, 1995; *Guest Cast*: Peter Donat (Bill Mulder); Floyd Crow Westerman (Albert); Melinda McGraw (Melissa Scully); Sheila Larken (Mrs. Scully); Nicholas Lea (Krycek); William B. Davis (Cigarette Smoking Man); John Neville (Well-Manicured Man); Tom Braidwood (Frohike); Jerry Hardin (Deep Throat); Michael David Simms (Senior F.B.I. Agent); Dakota House (Eric); Rebecca Toolan (Mrs. Mulder); Don S. Williams, Forbes Angus, Ernie Foort, Lenno Britos, Ian Victor, Benita Ha.

The Cigarette Smoking Man has launched a deadly offensive against the truth: burning the train car filled with half-human corpses, hunting Mulder and ... killing him? While Scully believes her partner has been burned to death in the train explosion, Albert and his family discover a wounded Mulder in the desert and nurse him back to health with a Native American ritual known as the Blessing Way Chant. At the same time, Scully finds and removes a metal “Tag” embedded in her back, a device which has tracked her movements since her abduction.

**51. “Paper Clip”** Written by Chris Carter; Directed by Rob Bowman; airdate: September 29, 1995; *Guest Cast*: Walter Gotell (Victor Klemper); Melinda McGraw (Melissa Scully); Sheila Larken (Mrs. Scully); Nicholas Lea (Krycek); William B. Davis (Cigarette Smoking Man); John Neville (The Well-Manicured Man); Tom Braidwood, Dean Haglund, Bruce Harwood (The Lone Gunmen); Floyd Crow Westerman (Albert); Rebecca Toolan (Mrs. Mulder); Don S. Williams, Robert Lewis, Lenno Britos.

A showdown between Scully, Mulder, and Skinner ends with a reaffirmation of trust, but tragedy strikes when Krycek murders Scully’s sister. An investigation of Bill Mulder’s history reveals he was working with Nazi scientists brought to America as part of Operation Paper Clip, a post World War II project. What, exactly, he was working on, however, is a mystery that can only be solved at an old factory located in West Virginia. There, Mulder and Scully find a vast card catalog filled with the names of women and men who have been abducted for a top secret experiment.

**52. “D.P.O.”** Written by Howard Gordon; Directed by Kim Manners; airdate: October 6, 1995; *Guest Cast*: Giovanni Ribisi (Darren Peter Oswald); Jack Black (Zero); Ernie Lively (Sheriff Teller); Karen

Witter (Sharon Kiveat); Steve Makaj (Frank Kiveat); Peter Anderson (Stan Buxton); Kate Robbins (Mrs. Oswald); Brent Chapman (Traffic Cop); Jason Anthony Griffith (Paramedic).

In Connerville, Oklahoma, four deaths have occurred by what appears to be directed lightning strikes. Scully and Mulder tackle the case and come to the realization that the attacks may be the responsibility of Darren Peter Oswald (D.P.O.), a teenager who was once struck by lightning himself. Darren, a dim-witted boy with self-esteem issues, uses his power as a way to control his life and become someone of importance ... even if the result is murder. Now Darren is utilizing his ability to harness electricity to win the heart of a local school teacher.

**53. “Clyde Bruckman’s Final Repose”** Written by Darin Morgan; Directed by David Nutter; airdate: October 13, 1995; *Guest Cast:* Peter Boyle (Clyde Bruckman); Stu Charno (Killer); Jaap Broeker (The Stupendous Yappi); Frank Cassini (Detective Cline); Dwight McFee (Detective Havez); Alex Diakun (Tarot Dealer); Karen Konoval (Madame Zelma); Ken Roberts (Clerk); Greg Anderson (Photographer).

A serial killer is murdering fortune tellers and other professional prognosticators, and Scully and Mulder are on the case. When the Stupendous Yappi fails to come up with any useful leads, Scully and Mulder recruit real psychic, would-be victim, and insurance salesman, Clyde Bruckman, to help solve the crimes. Bruckman has an unusual ability: he can predict the exact manner of death for other people, but nothing else. When the killer comes after Bruckman, Mulder and Scully must protect him from a fate he has already seen in visions and in dreams.

**54. “The List”** Written by Chris Carter; Directed by Chris Carter; airdate: October 20, 1995; *Guest Cast:* Ken Foree (Vincent Parmelly); April Grace (Danielle Manley); J.T. Walsh (Warden); John Toles-Bey (John Spozanza); Bokeem Woodbine (Roke); Badja Djola (Nietzsche); Greg Rogers (Charez); Mitchell Kosterman (Fornier); Don MacCay (Oates); Paul Raskin (Ullrich); Denny Arnold and Craig Brunanski (Guards).

At Eastpoint State Penitentiary in Florida, a prisoner on death row is executed, but the terror is just beginning for the warden, the guards, the executioner, and the other men and women who are on the prisoner’s short list of five. When a guard turns up dead in the executed prisoner’s cell, Scully and Mulder investigate the unexplained death. They learn that the dead prisoner, Nietzsche Manley, believed in the transmigration of the soul. Before long, there are more deaths ... and the possibility that Nietzsche is avenging his own death from beyond the grave seems increasingly likely.

**55. “2Shy”** Written by Jeffrey Vlaming; Directed by David Nutter; airdate: November 3, 1995; *Guest Cast:* Timothy Carhart (Virgil Incanto); Catherine Paolone (Ellen Kaminsky); James Handy (Detective Cross); Kerry Sandomirsky (Joanne); Aloka McLean (Jesse); Suzy Joachim (Jennifer); Glynis Davies (Monica); Randi Lynne (Lauren MacKalvie); William MacDonald (Dan Kazanjian).

In Cleveland, OH, a serial killer selects his victims over the Internet, meeting them in a lonely heart chat room for “big and beautiful” women. But this is no ordinary stalker: he’s a mutant who eats the fatty tissue from his victims. 2Shy, as the killer calls himself on the net, cannot produce adipose and other fatty materials so he must ingest that tissue from others to remain alive. While Scully rejects the idea of a “fat sucking vampire,” Mulder is convinced that the duo is dealing with a genetically “different” creature who kills not out of psychosis, but a desperate physiological condition.

**56. "The Walk"** Written by John Shiban; Directed by Rob Bowman; airdate: November 10, 1995; *Guest Cast:* Thomas Kopache (General Callaghan); Willie Garson (Roach); Don Thompson (Victor Stans); Nancy Sorel (Janet Draper); Ian Tracey (Rappo); Brennan Kotowich (Trevor); Andrea Barclay (Mrs. Callahan); Paula Shaw (Nurse).

Someone with a strange power is taking his revenge against the military, killing off officers from Desert Storm in a brutal fashion. After a near-lethal burning in which a man is scalded in boiling water, Mulder and Scully investigate at the army VA hospital, where several wounded soldiers are spending the rest of their days. Soon, Mulder suspects that one of the soldiers is using astral projection to kill those whom he deems guilty for his condition. Mulder and Scully fear that the next target will be the general and his family, but they may already be too late to stop the vengeful soul.

**57. "Oubliette"** Written by Charles Grant Craig; Directed by Kim Manners; airdate: November 17, 1995; *Guest Cast:* Tracey Ellis (Lucy Householder); Michael Chieffo (Carl Wade); Jewel Staite (Amy Jacobs); Ken Ryan (Walt Eubanks); Dean Wray (Tow Truck Driver); Jacques LaLonde (Henry); David Fredericks (Larson); Sidonie Boll (Myra Jacobs); Robert Underwood (Paramedic).

At the same time that a young girl named Amy is abducted from her bed by a serial killer, a lonely waitress named Lucy experiences the girl's terror and wounds, even though she is working halfway across town. Lucy was herself abducted by this same madman as a child and now she has a telepathic link to Amy, a link Mulder hopes he can exploit to save the girl. Scully discovers that the abductor is a photographer, Carl Wade, who took photographs at Amy's school the week she vanished. Mulder's belief in Lucy's empathic abilities jeopardizes his relationship with local authorities even as Lucy's powers endanger her very life.

**58. "Nisei"** Written by Chris Carter, Howard Gordon, and Frank Spotnitz; Directed by David Nutter; airdate: November 24, 1995; *Guest Cast:* Stephen McHattie (Assassin); Raymond J. Barry (Senator Richard Matheson); Robert Ito (Dr. Ishimaru); Tom Braidwood, Dean Haglund, Bruce Harwood (The Lone Gunmen); Steven Williams (X); Gillian Barber (Penny); Brendan Beiser (Agent Pendrell); Lottie Holloway (Corrine Koslo); Diane (Tori Triolo); Paul McLean, Yasuo Sakurai.

Mulder purchases a video of an alien autopsy, one which he believes to be authentic. The video's producer has been murdered, execution-style, but Mulder apprehends an Asian agent, fluent in the martial arts, leaving the producer's premises. When the assassin is released because of diplomatic immunity, Mulder and Scully attempt to solve the case from another angle, questioning a UFO abductee named Betsy Hagopian (a member of MUFON) and seeking the assistance of the Lone Gunmen. With the help of several fellow abductees, some of whom are dying of an unknown form of cancer, Scully starts to recollect her own abduction experience even as Mulder follows the trail to a UFO recovered from the ocean.

**59. "731"** Written by Frank Spotnitz; Directed by Rob Bowman; airdate: December 1, 1995; *Guest Cast:* Steven Williams (X); Stephen McHattie (Assassin); William B. Davis (Cigarette Smoking Man); Robert Ito (Dr. Ishimaru); Colin Cunningham (Escalante); Don S. Williams (First Elder); Brendan Beiser (Agent Pendrell); Michael Puttonen (Conductor).

Mulder follows an alien corpse (in a body bag) to a train. Though "X" warns Scully to keep Mulder from boarding the vehicle at all costs, Mulder jumps the train, already in motion. What he finds aboard is the same "dissection" lab he saw on the alien autopsy video. Unfortunately, an assassin is

aboard the train as well ... along with several tons of explosives. Meanwhile, the details of Scully's abduction and the work of a Japanese scientist come to the forefront of the investigation.

**60. "Revelations"** Written by Kim Newton; Directed by David Nutter; airdate: December 15, 1995; *Guest Cast:* R. Lee Ermey (False Prophet); Kevin Zegers (Kevin Crider); Sam Bottoms (Mr. Crider); Kenneth Welsh (Simon Gates/Frau/The Devil); Michael Berryman (Owen Lee Jarvis); Hayley Tyson (Mrs. Crider); Lesley Ewan (Corina Maywald) Fulvio Cecere (Priest); Nicole Robert (Mrs. Tynes).

Mulder and Scully discover a preadolescent boy who bears stigmata, wounds mimicking those of Jesus Christ during the Crucifixion. It becomes imperative to protect the boy from a predator who may be a nutcase overcome with Jerusalem Syndrome, the belief that he is a messianic force, or the devil himself. The boy's father and a bald protector, an Incorruptible, claim that the "Great War," Armageddon, is in progress, and warn Scully to save the child lest evil take the day. Scully comes to believe that God is operating through her, his messenger, but to find the truth she must go full circle, and overcome the skeptical objections of Agent Mulder.

**61. "War of the Coprophages"** Written by Darin Morgan; Directed by Kim Manners; airdate: January 5, 1996; *Guest Cast:* Bobbie Phillips (Dr. Bambi Berenbaum); Raye Birk (Dr. Eckerly); Dion Anderson (Sheriff); Bill Dow (Dr. Newton); Alex Bruhanski (Dr. Bugger); Ken Kramer (Dr. Ivanov); Alan Buckley, Nicole Parker, Tyler Labine (Kids in Basement).

Miller's Grove, MA, has a bad bug problem—it is teeming with cockroaches, and murderous cockroaches to boot! Mulder is in town to investigate reports of lights in the sky, but the roach attacks soon merit his full attention. Although Scully poo-poops the idea of malevolent cockroaches, Mulder learns of a top secret department of agriculture entomological experiment in town examining a new breed of roaches. More curious than that, evidence indicates that the cockroaches are metallic ... perhaps alien probes sent from another world, another intelligence, to examine this planet.

**62. "Syzygy"** Written by Chris Carter; Directed by Rob Bowman; airdate: January 26, 1996; *Guest Cast:* Dana Wheeler-Nicholson (Detective White); Wendy Benson (Margie Kleinjan); Lisa Robin Kelly (Terri Roberts); Garry Davey (Spitz); Denalda Williams (Zirinka); Gabrielle Miller (Brenda); Ryan Reynolds ("Boom" Jay De Boom); Tim Dixon (Dr. R.W. Godfrey); Ryk Brown (Minister); Jeremy Radick (Young Man); Russell Porter (Scott Simone).

Three popular high school boys have died in the little town of Comity in as many months, and local authorities suspect the activities of a satanic cult. Scully and Mulder look into the matter and Scully immediately suspects that two teenage cheerleaders, Terry Roberts and Margie Kleinjan, are involved, since they both witnessed the most recent death. The two girls are also present when a basketball player who offended them is mysteriously crushed by the gymnasium's retractable bleachers. A local astrologist believes the girls have received unusual powers from a planetary alignment of Mars, Mercury, and Uranus which occurs once every 84 years ... an alignment which is also having an effect on Mulder and Scully ... who become, respectively, horny and snippy.

**63. "Grotesque"** Written by Howard Gordon; Directed by Kim Manners; airdate: February 2, 1996; *Guest Cast:* Levani (John Mostow); Kurtwood Smith (Bill Patterson); Greg Thirloway (Agent Nemhauser); Susan Bain (Agent Sheherlis); Kasper Michaels (Young Agent); Zoran Vukelic (Model).

An art model is murdered by a sicko serial killer who has an obsession with gargoyles. This is the

latest killing in a three-year spree, and the murderer, Mostow, is finally apprehended by Mulder's judgmental and hard-driven mentor, Bill Patterson. When a copycat starts to murder men in the same manner as Mostow, Mulder delves deep into the mind of the psychopath to ferret out the truth. Was the killer possessed by a demonic force that has found a new host, or is it just a madman whose madness has become infectious?

**64. "Piper Maru"** Written by Frank Spotnitz and Chris Carter; Directed by Rob Bowman; airdate: February 9, 1996; *Guest Cast*: Nicholas Lea (Krycek); Robert Clothier (Commander Johanson); Jo Bates (Geraldine); Ari Solomon (Bernard Gauthier); Kimberly Unger (Joan Gauthier); Morris Panych (Gray Haired Man); Stephen E. Miller (Wayne Morgan); Paul Batten (Doctor); Lenno Britos (Luis Cardinal); Tegan Moss (Young Dana Scully); Robert F. Maier (Pilot); Russell Ferrier (Medic); Rochelle Greenwood (Waitress); Tom Scholte (Young Johanson).

The crew of a French salvage vessel, the *Piper Maru*, is exposed to deadly levels of radiation, and Mulder suspects it was caused by close proximity to a sunken U.F.O. One French sailor, however, has become possessed by an alien entity, the black cancer, which controls him completely. While Mulder traces clues to the salvage office headquarters and eventually Hong Kong, Scully investigates a fifty-year-old case involving the submarine *Zeus Faber*, which was also seeking the same downed U.F.O. Krycek reappears unexpectedly, and Skinner is shot by the same man who killed Scully's sister.

**65. "Apocrypha"** Written by Frank Spotnitz and Chris Carter; Directed by Kim Manners; airdate: February 16, 1996; *Guest Cast*: John Neville (Well-Manicured Man); William B. Davis (Cigarette Smoking Man); Tom Braidwood, Dean Haglund, Bruce Harwood (Lone Gunmen); Nicholas Lea (Krycek); Kevin McNulty (Agent Fuller); Barry Levy (Navy Doctor); Dmitri Chepovetsky (Government Man); Sue Mathew (Agent Caleca); Don S. Williams (Elder # 1); Lenno Britos (Hispanic Man); Frances Flanagan (Nurse); Brendan Beiser (Agent Pendrell); Peter Scoular (Sick Crewman); Jeff Chives (Armed Man); Martin Evans (Major Domo).

With a captured Krycek in tow, Mulder attempts to retrieve the defense department intelligence disc on U.F.O.s. Meanwhile, Scully protects the wounded Skinner, convinced that his shooting was no random act of violence, but part of the larger conspiracy. Possessed by the black cancer entity, Krycek escapes from custody, and Mulder meets with the Well-Manicured Man in Central Park. Now there is a race to see which faction will gain possession of the downed U.F.O. first, its alien pilot (inside Krycek as the black cancer) or Mulder and Scully.

**66. "Pusher"** Written by Vince Gilligan; Directed by Rob Bowman; airdate: February 23, 1996; *Guest Cast*: Robert Wisden (Robert Patrick Modell/"Pusher"); Vic Polizos (Frank Burst); Steve Bacic (Collins); Roger Cross (SWAT Lieutenant); Brent Sheppard (Prosecutor); Don Mackay (Judge); D. Neil Mark (Kerber); Meredith Bain Woodward (Attorney); Julia Arkos (Holly); Ernie Foort (Lobby Guard); Darren Lucas (SWAT Cop).

A man called "Pusher" has the telepathic ability to place thoughts and suggestions into the minds of others, a talent he has utilized to commit murder for hire some fourteen times. After he telepathically forces a police officer to drive straight into an oncoming truck, Mulder and Scully begin to hunt this unusual Ronin, this samurai with no master. An FBI sting goes wrong when Pusher "suggests" that an agent immolate himself, but the criminal is captured despite the tragedy. Pusher escapes legal justice by mentally influencing the judge, leaving Mulder to face a deadly showdown at the hospital with the malevolent mental warrior.

**67. “Teso Dos Bichos”** Written by John Shiban; Directed by Kim Manners; airdate: March 8, 1996; *Guest Cast:* Vic Trevino (Dr. Bilak); Janne Mortil (Mona Wussner); Gordon Tootoosis (Shaman); Tom McBeath (Dr. Lewton); Ron Suave (Mr. Decker); Alan Robertson (Roosevelt); Garrison Chrisjohn (Dr. Winters).

In Ecuador, an archaeological dig uncovers an ancient urn which contains the remains of a female shaman, and is therefore sacred to the Indian tribe nearby. The artifact is removed to the United States despite a curse which states that those who remove the Amaru urn will be devoured by the spirit of the jaguar. Mulder and Scully head to the Boston Museum of Natural History, where the bones are displayed, after the mysterious death of a doctor on the project. When the death toll starts to mount, and rats start to evacuate the museum by the hundreds, Scully and Mulder are forced to argue: Are politics behind these murders, or are they seeing an ancient curse played out in a modern American city?

**68. “Hell Money”** Written by Jeffrey Vlaming; Directed by Tucker Gates; airdate: March 29, 1996; *Guest Cast:* B.D. Wong (Detective Chao); Lucy Alexis Liu (Kim); Michael Yama (Hsin); James Hong (Doctor); Doug Abrahams (Detective Neary); Ellie Harvie (OPO Staffer); Derek Lowe (Johnny Low); Donald Pong (Vase Man); Diana Ha (Dr. Wu); Stephen M.D. Chang (Large Man); Paul Wong (Wiry Man).

In Chinatown, a man who is burned alive in a furnace scrawls the legend “ghost” in Chinese on the wall. Mulder and Scully investigate the murder, a puzzle which starts with a torn piece of “hell money” found at the scene, an offering at the Chinese festival of the hungry ghost. The hunt ends not with spectral visitors, however, but with a corrupt gambling ring in which the poor end up losing their precious body parts to a surgeon who sells them on the black market.

**69. “Jose Chung’s ‘From Outer Space’”** Written by Darin Morgan; Directed by Rob Bowman; airdate: April 12, 1996; *Guest Cast:* Charles Nelson Reilly (Jose Chung); William Lucking (Rocky); Daniel Quinn (Lieutenant Shaeffer); Jesse Ventura (Man in Black); Sarah Sawatsky (Crissy); Jason Gaffney (Harold); Alex Diakun (Dr. Fingers); Larry Musser (Detective Manners); Allan Zinyk (Blaine); Michael Dobson (Sgt. Hynek); Mina E. Mina (Dr. Hand); Jaap Broeker (The Stupendous Yappi); Alex Trebek (Himself).

Two teenagers in Klass County, Washington, are imperiled by dueling aliens on the way home from their first date. A popular author, Jose Chung, interviews Scully about the case. She and Mulder have a difference of opinion about the truth: Mulder thinks it was a genuine alien abduction and Scully believes it was just date rape and ensuing posttraumatic stress. A witness to the abduction named Rocky claims that a third alien, one from the Earth’s molten core and named Lord Kimbote, was involved ... as were two unearthly Men in Black.

**70. “Avatar”** Written by Howard Gordon; From a story by David Duchovny and Howard Gordon; Directed by James Charleston; airdate: April 26, 1996; *Guest Cast:* Tom Mason (Detective Waltos); Jennifer Hetrick (Sharon Skinner); William B. Davis (Cigarette Smoking Man); Amanda Tapping (Carina Sales); Malcolm Stewart (Agent Bonnezeze); Brendan Beiser (Agent Pendrell).

On the verge of signing divorce papers which will end his seventeen-year marriage, Skinner meets a beautiful woman in a hotel bar and goes to bed with her. The next morning, he awakes to find her dead in bed beside him, and he claims to remember nothing. Scully conducts an autopsy on the dead

woman, a prostitute, and discovers a strange luminescent glow around her mouth and nose. Meanwhile, Skinner has persistent visions of an old woman in a red slicker ... a woman who Mulder believes is a succubus.

**71. “Quagmire”** Written by Kim Newton; Directed by Kim Manners; airdate: May 3, 1996; *Guest Cast:* Chris Ellis (Sheriff); Timothy Webber (Dr. Faraday); R. Nelson Brown (Ansel Bray); Mark Acheson (Bertram); Tyler Labine (Stoner); Nicole Parker (Chick); Terrance Leigh (Snorkel Dude).

On a crisp Saturday morning, Mulder and Scully head out to Heuvelman’s Lake, GA, to investigate the recent disappearance of a federal forestry officer. Mulder thinks “Big Blue,” a prehistoric sea monster, may be responsible, but Scully believes a boating accident is more likely. As more bodies surface on the lake, and Scully’s pet dog is devoured, the agents head out on the water in a nocturnal attempt to confirm the existence of Big Blue. As night falls, Mulder and Scully’s boat is smashed by a powerful underwater entity, and Mulder and Scully seek escape on a tiny rock in the middle of the lake.

*Note:* This episode features the second appearance of the “Chick” and the “Stoner,” two characters who survived tragedy in “War of the Coprophages,” only to encounter another X-file in “Quagmire.”

**72. “Wetwired”** Written by Mat Beck; Directed by Rob Bowman; airdate: May 10, 1996; *Guest Cast:* Sheila Larken (Mrs. Scully); William B. Davis (Cigarette Smoking Man); Tom Braidwood, Dean Haglund, Bruce Harwood (The Lone Gunmen); Steven Williams (X); Linden Banks, Tim Henry.

A man in Braddocks Height, Maryland, brutally murders five people whom he mistakenly believes are the same person: a Bosnian dictator dubbed by the media as the “modern Hitler.” A mysterious source from the government asks Mulder to investigate, lest more people be killed, so he and Scully start the task. They find that the perpetrator has a vast collection of videotapes, and Scully wonders if there is a connection between what’s on the TV and an impulse to commit murder. After another murder is committed by another seemingly average person, Mulder finds a strange device at the cable box which is emitting an electronic signal ... a signal that is now adversely affecting an increasingly paranoid Agent Scully.

**73. “Talitha Cumi”** Written by Chris Carter; From a story by David Duchovny and Chris Carter; Directed by R.W. Goodwin; airdate: May 17, 1996; *Guest Cast:* William B. Davis (Cigarette Smoking Man); Steven Williams (X); Peter Donat (Bill Mulder); Melinda McGraw (Melissa Scully); Roy Thinnes (Jeremiah Smith); Brian Thompson (Alien Bounty Hunter); Hrothgar Mathews (Galen Muntz); Rebecca Toolan (Mrs. Mulder); Stephen Dimopoulos (Detective); John McLaren (Doctor); Cam Cronin (Paramedic); Bonnie Hay (Night Nurse).

Mulder learns of a secret connection between the Cigarette Smoking Man and his mother. When Mrs. Mulder has a stroke and only little hope of surviving, Mulder unexpectedly finds hope in his pursuit of Jeremiah Smith, an alien refugee with seemingly miraculous healing powers. Now Mulder must catch Jeremiah Smith before the alien bounty hunter catches up with him.

• *Fourth Season (1996–1997)*

**74. “Herrenvolk”** Written by Chris Carter; Directed by R.W. Goodwin; airdate: October 4, 1996; *Guest Cast:* Roy Thinnes (Jeremiah Smith); Brian Thompson (Alien Bounty Hunter); William B. Davis (Cigarette Smoking Man); Steven Williams (X); Laurie Holden (Marie); Rebecca Toolan (Mrs.

Mulder); Brendan Beiser (Agent Pendrell); Garvin Cross, Morris Panych.

The shapeshifting alien bounty hunter has returned to Earth to hunt down and kill Jeremiah Smith, the alien man with the miraculous healing powers. Meanwhile, Mulder's mother hovers near death, and Jeremiah Smith takes Mulder to a bee farm which Smith claims is part of the grand colonization scheme. At the same time, Scully discovers that the conspiracy is tagging and cataloguing the American populace through protein differentials in smallpox vaccinations. X is set-up and killed by murderous colleagues.

**75. "Home"** Written by Glen Morgan and James Wong; Directed by Kim Manners; airdate: October 11, 1996; *Guest Cast:* Tucker Smallwood (Sheriff Andy Taylor); Chris Nelson Norris, Adrian Hughes, John Trottier (The Peacock Brothers); Karin Konoval (Mrs. Peacock); Sebastian Spence (Barney Pastor); Judith Maxie (Mrs. Taylor); Kenny James (Radiologist); Lachlan Murdoch (Right Fielder); Neil Denis (Catcher); Cory Fry (Batter); Douglas Smith (Pitcher).

A dead baby, apparently afflicted with massive birth deformities, is unearthed in the quiet town of Home, PA. Scully and Mulder discover that the baby was buried alive and try to question the residents nearest the crime scene, a family called the Peacocks. But this is one weird brood: three mutant brothers guard their crazy old mother, an amputee, who also happens to be the progenitor of the boy's offspring. In infiltrating the isolated, rural Peacock residence, Mulder and Scully find themselves in mortal danger from this feral, animalistic family who fear that their territory has been invaded.

**76. "Teliko"** Written by Howard Gordon; Directed by James Charleston; airdate: October 18, 1996; *Guest Cast:* Carl Lumbly (Marcus Duff); Willie Amakye (Samuel Aboah); Laurie Holden (Marita Covarrubias); Brendan Beiser (Agent Pendrell); Zakes Mokae (Minister); Bob Morrisey (Dr. Bruin); Danny Wattley (First Officer); Maxine Guess (Flight Attendant); Bill Mackenzie (Bus Driver); Michael O'Shea (Lt. Madison).

Several black man have died in Philadelphia with a total depigmentation as the only indicator of what killed them. The CDC believes the deaths are a result of a new and deadly disease, and enlist Scully to prove the theory but Mulder once again resorts to examining "extreme" possibilities. In this situation, he suspects an African man is actually using paralyzing thorns to immobilize his prey and then drain their pituitary glands. The creature is called a Teliko, and it is a mythical beast of West Africa that has now set its sights on Mulder.

**77. "Unruhe"** Written by Vince Gilligan; Directed by Rob Bowman; airdate: October 27, 1996; *Guest Cast:* Pruitt Taylor Vince (Gerald Schnauz); Sharon Alexander (Mary Le Fonte); William MacDonald (Trott); Ron Chartier (Inspector).

In Traverse City, Michigan, a young woman stops at a drug store to have her passport photograph taken. She is abducted by a deranged killer immediately afterwards, yet her photo (taken before the kidnappings) shows her in mortal danger ... surrounded by tiny monstrous demons. Scully and Mulder look into the case and are shocked when the victim is returned—lobotomized. The killer strikes again and again—finally capturing Scully and preparing to lobotomize her so as to free her from the restless demons, the "howlers," in her mind.

**78. "The Field Where I Died"** Written by Glen Morgan and James Wong; Directed by Rob Bowman; airdate: November 3, 1996; *Guest Cast:* Kristen Cloke (Melissa Reedell Ephesian/Sarah Kavanaugh);



Michael Massee (Vernon Ephesian); Doug Abrahams (Harbaugh); Anthony Harrison (Riggins).

Scully and Mulder join an ATF raid to shut down the temple of the seven stars, a cult led by the megalomaniacal prophet Vernon Ephesian. Unexpectedly, Mulder finds a personal connection with one of Ephesian's seven wives, a woman suffering from multiple personality disorder who claims to have knowledge of Mulder from a past life. In particular, Mulder comes to believe that he was a Confederate soldier during the Civil War and that Ephesian's wife, Melissa, was his nurse and soulmate. In that life, the lovers died apart because of the War Between the States, and Mulder is afraid that such a tragic separation is his destiny in life after life.

**79. "Sanguinarium"** Written by Valerie Mayhew and Vivian Mayhew; Directed by Kim Manners; airdate: November 10, 1996; *Guest Cast:* John Juliani (Dr. Lloyd); Arlene Mazerolle (Dr. Shannon); Richard Beymer (Dr. Franklin); Paul Raskin (Dr. Amanpour); Gregory Thirloway (Dr. Kaplan); Martin Evans (Dr. Hartman); Marie Stillin (Dr. Sanford).

A chi-chi plastic surgeon claims he was possessed when he murdered a patient on his table. Scully and Mulder investigate the doctor and his clinic, and reluctantly come to the conclusion that witchcraft is somehow involved in this and other recent deaths. When their prime suspect in the case dies, apparently through witchcraft or other occult means, Mulder and Scully realize they need to rethink the case.

**80. "Musings of a Cigarette Smoking Man"** Written by Glen Morgan; Directed by James Wong; airdate: November 17, 1996; *Guest Cast:* William B. Davis (Cigarette Smoking Man); Morgan Weisser (Lee Harvey Oswald); Chris Owens (Young Cigarette Smoking Man); Donnelly Rhodes (General); Tom Braidwood, Bruce Harwood (Lone Gunmen); Jerry Hardin (Deep Throat); Dan Zukovic (Agent); Peter Hanlon (Aide); Dean Aylesworth (Young Bill Mulder); Paul Jarrett (James Earl Ray); David Fredericks (Director); Laurie Murdock (Lydon).

The Lone Gunmen recount the (possibly apocryphal) life story of the Cigarette Smoking Man. Apparently, his father was a Soviet sympathizer who was executed for treason, and his mother died before he was even a year old. As he grew, the Cigarette Smoking Man became a dark agent of conspiracies, assassinating JFK and Martin Luther King Jr. But under a lifetime of seemingly evil deeds beats the heart of an intensely lonely man, and a struggling writer who just wants to get published.

**81. "Tunguska"** Written by Frank Spotnitz and Chris Carter; Directed by Kim Manners; airdate: November 24, 1996; *Guest Cast:* William B. Davis (Cigarette Smoking Man); Nicholas Lea (Alex Krycek); Laurie Holden (Marie Covarrubias); John Neville (The Well-Manicured Man); Brendan Beiser (Agent Pendrell); Fritz Weaver (Senator Sorenson); Malcolm Stewart (Dr. Sachs); David Bloom (Stress Man); Campbell Lane (Chairman); Stefan Arnglim (Prisoner); Brent Stait (Timothy Mayhew).

During a raid against an extreme-right militia group, Alex Krycek is apprehended by Mulder and Scully. Krycek leads the duo to a Russian diplomat who has carried a black rock into the U.S., a meteor four billion years old, perhaps from Mars, and containing a deadly alien black bacteria. Mulder flies with Krycek to Tunguska, Russia, to the meteor crash site, while Scully and Skinner are requested to provide testimony about the matter before Congress. In Russia, Mulder is apprehended by slavers and exposed to the deadly alien bacteria while imprisoned at a primitive gulag turned research

base.

**82. “Terma”** Written by Frank Spotnitz and Chris Carter; Directed by Rob Bowman; airdate: December 1, 1996; *Guest Cast*: William B. Davis (Cigarette Smoking Man); Nicholas Lea (Alex Krycek); John Neville (The Well-Manicured Man); Stefan Arngrim (Prisoner); Jan Rubes (Vassily Peskow); Fritz Weaver (Senator Sorenson); Brendan Beiser (Agent Pendrell); Campbell Lane (Committee Chairman Romine); Brent Stait (Mayhew); Dr. Bonita Sayre (Jessica Schreier).

After his exposure to the black cancer organisms in Tunguska, Russia, Mulder plots his escape from the gulag. Meanwhile, Scully investigates the murder of a prominent virologist, for whom the meteorite chunk was originally intended. While Scully is held in contempt of Congress for her refusal to reveal Mulder’s whereabouts, Mulder returns to the United States. Once there, Scully and Mulder team up and head for Terma, North Dakota, where a convenient accident has been prepared to destroy all evidence of the meteorite and the deadly virus organism it contains inside.

**83. “Paper Hearts”** Written by Vince Gilligan; Directed by Rob Bowman; airdate: December 15, 1996; *Guest Cast*: Tom Noonan (John Lee Roche); Rebecca Toolan (Mrs. Mulder); Byrne Piven (Robert); Vanessa Morely (Samantha Mulder); Carly McKillip (Caitlin Ross).

Mulder has a dream in which a red pointer leads him to the dead body of a young girl and, sadly, reality soon mirrors his dream. He has found the fourteenth victim of John Lee Roche, a serial killer he put away years earlier. Now, armed with a book of 16 paper hearts cut from the blouses of each of Roche’s victims, Mulder tries to find the last two dead girls, who have never even been known about. A shocking revelation occurs as Roche informs Mulder that Samantha, his own sister—presumed abducted all this time—was one of his last two victims.

**84. “El Mundo Gira”** Written by John Shiban; Directed by Tucker Gates; airdate: January 12, 1997; *Guest Cast*: Ruben Blades (Agent Lozano); Raymond Cruz (Elario Buente); Pamela Diaz (Maria Dorantes); Jose Yenque (Soledad Buente); Lillian Hurst (Flakita); Robert Thurston (Dr. Larry Steen); Simi (Gabrielle); Mike Kopsa (Rick Culver).

After a blinding flash of light, a strange rain falls on the migrant workers’ camp in San Joaquin Valley, California. The people living there believe that *el chupacabra*, a goatsucker, killed several goats and a beautiful young woman, but Scully and Mulder come to a different conclusion: people are dying of an aggressive fungal infection which is being spread by a compromised migrant worker. Mulder suspects that space debris, extraterrestrial matter, is behind the development of this modern day Typhoid Mary.

**85. “Leonard Betts”** Written by Vince Gilligan, John Shiban and Frank Spotnitz; Directed by Kim Manners; airdate: January 26, 1997; *Guest Cast*: Paul McCrane (Leonard Morris Betts/Albert Tanner/Truelove); Marjorie Lovett (Elaine Tanner); Jennifer Clement (Michele Wilkes); Bill Dow (Charles Burks); Sean Campbell (Local Cop); Dave Hurtubise (Pathologist); Peter Bryant (Uniformed Cop); Laura Sadiq (Female EMT); J. Douglas Stewart (Male EMT); Brad Loree (Security Guard).

Paramedic Leonard Betts is decapitated in a catastrophic ambulance accident in Pittsburgh, PA. Later the same night, his headless body disappears from the morgue and the attendant is knocked unconscious by somebody. Scully and Mulder investigate and Mulder explores the bizarre hypothesis that Betts is a headless corpse who is somehow alive and walking. Scully gathers evidence which

suggests Betts is riddled with cancer, and that somehow he is using the sickness to regenerate body parts. To Scully's horror, Bett's ability to pinpoint cancer in others is turned on her.

**86. "Never Again"** Written by Glen Morgan and James Wong; Directed by Rob Bowman; airdate: February 2, 1997; *Guest Cast:* Rodney Rowland (Ed Jerse); Igor Morozov (Pudovkin); Carla Stewart (Judge); Barry Hortin (Bartender); Jan Bailey Mattie (Ms. Hadden); Rita Bozi (Ms. Vansen); Marilyn Chin (Mrs. Shima-Tsuno); Jillian Fargey (Kay Schilling); B.J. Harison (Hannah); Jay Donahue (Detective Gouveia); Ian Robison (Detective Smith).

After a long night of drinking and the official dissolution of his failed marriage, loser Ed Jerse gets a tattoo on impulse. Unfortunately, the tattoo starts to speak to him, compelling him to commit violent acts. While Mulder is on vacation at Graceland (on what he terms a "spiritual" journey), Scully runs into Ed and, feeling rebellious, gets a tattoo herself. What neither tattoo recipient realizes is that the tattoo ink contains ergot, a dangerous substance with psychotic and hallucinogenic properties.

*Note:* An uncredited Jodie Foster provides the voice of the malevolent tattoo in this episode.

**87. "Memento Mori"** Written by Chris Carter, Vince Gilligan, John Shiban and Frank Spotnitz; Directed by Rob Bowman; airdate: February 9, 1997; *Guest Cast:* William B. Davis (Cigarette Smoking Man); Sheila Larken (Mrs. Scully); David Lovgren (Kurt Crawford); Gillian Barber (Penny Northern); Tom Braidwood, Dean Hagland, Bruce Harwood (The Lone Gunmen); Morris Panych (Gray Haired Man); Sean Allen (Dr. Kevin Scanlon); Julie Bono (Woman).

Mulder visits Scully at Holy Cross Hospital and she informs him that she has a nasopharyngeal tumor. Because of placement and type, this kind of cancer is inoperable and has a zero probability survival rate. Scully recalls that a group of UFO abductees she met the previous year contracted the same kind of tumor, after having removed a metal implant from the back of the neck. Scully learns that all the abductees have died of cancer, save for one ... who is now in the hospital on her last legs.

**88. "Kaddish"** Written by Howard Gordon; Directed by Kim Manners; airdate: February 16, 1997; *Guest Cast:* David Groh (Jacob Weiss); Channon Roe (Derek Banks); Justine Miceli (Ariel Weiss); David Wohl (Kenneth Unger); Harrison Coe (Isaac Luria); Jonathan Whitaker (Curt Brunjes); Timor Kocibilgiw (Tony); Jabin Litwiniec (Clinton); George Gordon (Detective); Murray Rabinovitch (1st Hasidic Man); David Freedman (Rabbi).

After an innocent Jewish storekeeper, Isaac Luria, is murdered in his store, a golem is animated to track down and destroy his killers. Scully and Mulder go to Brooklyn to investigate, but Scully suspects a hate crime, not a supernatural one. This theory seems especially applicable considering the hate groups who have targeted the Jews, as well Jacob Weiss's feelings of vengeance and hatred following the death of his son-in-law. When another murder occurs, Mulder feels the myth of the golem, a living being made of earth and clay, has been resurrected to bring about justice.

**89. "Unrequited"** Written by Howard Gordon and Chris Carter; Directed by James Charleston; airdate: February 23, 1997; *Guest Cast:* Scott Hylands (Bloch); Peter LaCroix (Nathaniel Teager); Ryan Michael (Agent Cameron Hill); Don McWilliams (Burkholder); Bill Agnew (General MacDougal); Mark Holden (Agent Chandler); Larry Musser (Markham); Lesley Ewan (Renee Davenport); Allan Franz (Dr. Keyser); William Nunn (Stefan); William Taylor (General Leitch).

Mulder, Scully, and Skinner must protect a top-ranked U.S. general against a bizarre opponent: a man who can seemingly make himself invisible to others. This assassin, a veteran himself, has a specific agenda in mind, and Scully and Mulder must discover what precisely it is before they lose their ward to the cloaked hitman's bullet. It all goes down at a very public event.

**90. "Tempus Fugit"** Written by Chris Carter and Frank Spotnitz; Directed by Rob Bowman; airdate: March 16, 1997; *Guest Cast:* Joe Spano (Millar); Tom O'Brien (Corporal Louis Frish); Scott Bellis (Max Fenig); Chilton Crane (Sharon Graffia); Brendan Beiser (Agent Pendrell); Greg Michaels, Rick Dobran, Robert Moloney, Jerry Schram.

A plane with abductee Max Fenig aboard is compromised in midair by a close-encounter with an unidentified craft. Scully and Mulder join the FAA investigation of the crash, even as an agent of the conspiracy takes steps to hide evidence of an assassin aboard the downed airliner ... an assassin who was out to silence Max forever and in the process retrieve some very classified stolen property. A closer examination of the crash brings to light evidence of the UFO "lost time" phenomenon, and a military air traffic controller, Frish, also comes forward to reveal the crash was not an accident. Meanwhile, Max's sister is abducted in his place and Mulder goes scuba diving to locate an alien ship which may have crashed underwater.

**91. "Max"** Written by Chris Carter and Frank Spotnitz; Directed by Kim Manners; airdate: March 23, 1997; *Guest Cast:* Joe Spano (Millar); Tom O'Brien (Corporal Louis Frish); Scott Bellis (Max Fenig); Chilton Crane (Sharon Graffia); Brendan Beiser (Agent Pendrell); Greg Michaels, Rick Dobran, Robert Moloney, Jerry Schram, David Palffy, Mark Wilson.

In pursuit of a submerged UFO, Mulder is chased and apprehended by the military. In Washington, Scully trades shots with a deadly assassin who killed Agent Pendrell while trying to silence Frish, the snitch who revealed the truth about downed air flight 549. The facts of the case take some bizarre turns when Sharon turns out to be a mental patient, not Max Fenig's sister, as she claimed. The key to this complex puzzle involves the theft of a radioactive object, a powerful energy source supposedly based on alien technology.

**92. "Synchrony"** Written by Howard Gordon and David Greenwalt; directed by James Charleston; airdate: April 13, 1997; *Guest Cast:* Joseph Fuqua (Jason Nicholls); Susan Lee Hoffman (Lisa Yanelli); Michael Fairman (Older Jason Nicholls); Jed Rees (Lucas Menand); Hiro Kanagawi (Dr. Yonechi); Jonathan Walker (Chuck Luckerman); Alison Matthews (Doctor); Norman Armour (Coroner); Patricia Iolette (Desk Clerk); Brent Chapman (Security Cop); Terry Arrowsmith (Uniformed Cop); Aurelo Di Nunzio (Detective).

At M.I.T. in Massachusetts an old man accosts two bickering students and warns one of them that he will die at precisely 11:46 P.M., when he is struck by a bus. The prediction comes true, and Mulder and Scully head to the scene to discover who the old man was and how his captor, a campus security man, was suddenly and irrevocably frozen to death. Soon a visiting Asian scientist in the field of cryobiology meets the same grim fate, and Scully and Mulder realize he has been fast-frozen by a compound which does not yet exist ... and could not possibly exist for at least ten years. The bizarre answer to this riddle is related to time travel: the old man is one of the bickering students, come back from the future to prevent the creation of a freezing compound and the discovery of time travel ... two factors in the creation of a world without either history or hope.

**93. “Small Potatoes”** Written by Vince Gilligan; Directed by Cliff Bole; airdate: April 20, 1997; *Guest Cast:* Darin Morgan (Edward H. Van Blundht); Christine Cavanaugh (Amanda Nelligan); Lee De Broux (Mr. Van Blundht).

In a small town, four babies in different families are born with tails! This oddity means that somehow, some way, the children all stem from the same father. Scully and Mulder look into the matter, discovering that blue collar janitor and schmuck Eddie Van Blundht can, via a bizarre muscle condition, alter his features to become *any* man and thus impregnate *any* woman. Soon, Van Blundht has escaped from custody, turned into an exact duplicate of Mulder, and set about to get the luscious Scully into the sack.

**94. “Zero Sum”** Written by Howard Gordon and Frank Spotnitz; Directed by Kim Manners; airdate: April 27, 1997; *Guest Cast:* William B. Davis (Cigarette Smoking Man); Laurie Holden (Maria Covarrubias); Nicolle Natrass (Misty); Paul McLean (Special Agent Koontz); Fred Keating (Detective Ray Thomas); Allan Gray (Entomologist); Addison Ridge (Besppectacled Guy); Don S. Williams (1st Elder); Lisa Stewart (Jane Brady); Barry Greene (Dr. Emile Linzer); Christopher Newton (Photo Technician); Morris Panych (Gray Haired Man).

Working under orders from the Cigarette Smoking Man, Skinner is coerced into cleaning up a crime scene where bees have killed an innocent postal employee. The cover-up is blown, however, when the investigating police detective is found murdered, execution-style, shortly after Skinner poses as Mulder to dispose of the forensic evidence. Mulder learns of the postal worker’s bizarre death and starts to look into the matter, further complicating Skinner’s position. At stake here is not just Scully’s life, the reason Skinner is involved in the first place, but the future of humankind, because the agents of the conspiracy are using bees as a delivery system for a deadly plague.

**95. “Elegy”** Written by John Shiban; Directed by James Charleston; airdate: May 4, 1997; *Guest Cast:* Steven M. Porter (Harold Spuler); Nancy Fish (Nurse Innes); Alex Bruhanski, Sydney Lassick, Daniel Kamin.

The owner of Angie’s Midnight Bowl in Washington, D.C., is surprised to see a bloodied woman in pain and dying in the machinery of one of his lanes. Strangely, the victim was not really there—she was an apparition and her violent murder occurred elsewhere. Scully and Mulder look into the case and Mulder soon believes that the bowling alley owner saw a death omen or a wraith. The answer to this unusual puzzle leads the duo from the F.B.I. to a mentally-impaired autistic man named Harold who has spent most of his life suffering from severe obsessive-compulsive egodystonia ... but the case unexpectedly becomes personal for a sick Scully when she starts to see premonitory visions of the next murder victims.

**96. “Demons”** Written by R.W. Goodwin; Directed by Kim Manners; airdate: May 11, 1997; *Guest Cast:* Jay Avocone (Detective Curtis); Mike Nussbaum (Dr. Charles Goldstein); Chris Owens (Young Cigarette Smoking Man); Rebecca Toolan (Mrs. Mulder); Andrew Johnston (Medical Examiner); Vanessa Morley (Young Samantha); Eric Breke (Admitting Officer); Rebecca Harker (Housekeeper); Shelley Adam (Young Mrs. Mulder); Dean Aylesworth (Young Mr. Mulder); Alex Haythorne (Young Fox Mulder).

After dreaming of his sister, Samantha, and the night she was abducted by aliens, Mulder wakes up in a motel room in Rhode Island with blood all over his clothes. Scully joins him and tries to help him

sort things out, but he has no memory of the past weekend and worse, two rounds have been fired from his weapon. The partners backtrack the weekend and find themselves at the house where the Mulder family summered years ago ... and where two people have been shot dead by Mulder's gun. Mulder is arrested by local authorities as Scully's attempt to clear his name leads to a radical and invasive psychological memory regression therapy.

**97. "Gethsemane"** Written by Chris Carter; Directed by R.W. Goodwin; airdate: May 18, 1997; *Guest Cast:* John Finn (Michael Kritschgau); Matthew Walker (Arlinsky); James Sutorious (Babcock); Sheila Larken (Mrs. Scully); Pat Skipper (Bill Scully); John Oliver (Rolston); Charles Cioffi (Section Chief Blevins); Steve Makaj (Ostelhoff); Nancy Kerr (Agent Hedin); Barry W. Levy (Vitagliano); Arnie Walters (Father McCue); Rob Freeman (Detective Rempulski); Craig Brunanski (Saw Operator).

After identifying Mulder's body, Scully goes before a panel headed by section chief Blevins and reports on the illegitimacy of Mulder's (now terminated) life work. She recounts the events leading up to Mulder's self-inflicted death. It all started when an alien body was found frozen in the ice in the Arctic, and Mulder went up to Canada to report on the validity of the discovery. Mulder and Scully soon came to believe that the alien was part of a hoax, and Mulder's faith was shattered when he learned that he was an unknowing dupe who has been fed misinformation about the existence of aliens ... so as to hide more mundane government secrets.

• *Fifth Season (1997–1998)*

**98. "Redux"** Written by Chris Carter; Directed by R.W. Goodwin; airdate: November 2, 1997; *Guest Cast:* William B. Davis (Cigarette Smoking Man); Charles Cioffi (Section Chief Blevins); John Finn (Michael Kritschgau); Tom Braidwood, Dean Haglund, Bruce Harwood (The Lone Gunmen); Steve Makaj (Ostelhoff); Ken Camroux (Senior Agent); Barry W. Levy (Vitagliano); Julia Arkos (Holly); Don S. Williams (Elder).

Mulder is believed dead of a self-inflicted gun wound, but his death has been staged by Mulder and Scully so as to expose the men behind the "Truth" concerning Scully's cancer and the existence of extraterrestrial life. Mulder pierces the conspiracy's lair at the department of defense with Kritschgau, the man who alerted him to the hoax in the first place, and with Level 4 clearance Mulder goes in search of a cure for Scully's cancer. Meanwhile, Dana begins to suspect that Skinner is somehow a part of the conspiracy. Kritschgau tells Mulder his version of the truth: an overspending, out-of-control military industrial complex invented the UFO story as part of its plan to divert America's attention away from military spending and a complex DNA tagging program.

**99. "Redux II"** Written by Chris Carter; Directed by Kim Manners; airdate: November 9, 1997; *Guest Cast:* William B. Davis (Cigarette Smoking Man); Charles Cioffi (Section Chief Blevins); Sheila Larken (Mrs. Scully); Pat Skipper (Bill Scully); Megan Leitch (Samantha Mulder); Tom Braidwood, Dean Haglund, Bruce Harwood (The Lone Gunmen); John Finn (Michael Kritschgau); Brent Sheppard (Doctor); Robert Wright (Dr. Zuckerman); Ken Camroux (Senior Agent); Don S. Williams (Elder); Arnie Walters (Father McCue).

Scully is in the ICU dying from cancer and Mulder's cure (stolen from the D.O.D. basement) needs to be deciphered if it is be useful to her. Mulder meets with Cigarette Smoking Man, who provides him the key to save Scully: a microchip in ionized water which will stop the spread of the disease. To

further gain Mulder's trust, Cigarette Smoking Man arranges for Fox to be reunited with his sister, Samantha ... who believes that the Cigarette Smoking Man is her father. But even as Mulder is offered a job by his worst enemy, all is not as it seems, and Scully's life hangs in the balance.

**100. "Unusual Suspects"** Written by Vince Gilligan; Directed by Kim Manners; airdate: November 16, 1997; *Guest Cast:* Richard Belzer (Detective Munch); Signy Coleman (Holly/Susanne Modeski); Bruce Harwood, Tom Braidwood, Dean Haglund (The Lone Gunmen); Steven Williams (Mr. X); Chris Nelson Norris (SWAT Lieutenant); Glenn Williams (Officer); Stuart O'Connell (First SWAT Cop); Ken Hawryliw (Himself).

A flashback to the year 1989 reveals how Mulder came to know the Lone Gunmen. In this case, a communications and electronics show in Baltimore is the event which causes the three conspiracy nuts to join forces for the first time. A mysterious woman claims her daughter has been kidnapped by a psychotic boyfriend, but what she really wants from the three civilians is access to a department of defense file on her. The Lone Gunmen attempt to decode the computer file, evade the psychotic boyfriend, whom the beautiful Holly has identified as Fox Mulder, and stop the government from conducting a dangerous EBO (Engineered Biological Operation) utilizing Ergotamine Histamine gas against the people of Baltimore.

*Note:* This episode of the *X-Files* crosses over with the universe of the NBC drama *Homicide: Life on the Streets*, and features *Homicide* star Richard Belzer as Detective Munch.

**101. "Detour"** Written by Frank Spotnitz; Directed by Brett Dowler; airdate: November 23, 1997; *Guest Cast:* Coleen Flynn (Michelle); J.C. Wendel (Stonecypher); Scott Burkholder (Kinsley); Merylyn Gann (Ms. Asekoff); Anthony Rapp (Jeff); Alfred E. Humphreys (Michael Asekoff); Tim Scholte (Michael Sloane); Tyler Thompson (Louis Asekoff); Simon Longmore (Marty Fox).

On the way to a team building seminar in west Florida, Mulder and Scully join a strange investigation already in process. A survey team and a man out hunting have disappeared in the forest. Mulder thinks some kind of camouflaged creature is dwelling in the woods and that the attacks are a response to encroaching human development. Mulder is soon sure they are facing one of the legendary Moth Men, humans from the time of Ponce de Leon who have evolved into forest-dwelling hunters with natural camouflage and glowing red eyes.

**102. "Post-Modern Prometheus"** Written and directed by Chris Carter; airdate: November 30, 1997; *Guest Cast:* John O'Hurley (Dr. Pollidori); Pattie Tierce (Shania Berkowitz); Stewart Gale (Izzie Berkowitz); Chris Owens (The Great Mutato); Dana Grahame, Chris Giacoletti, Jean-Yves Hammel, Tracey Bell, Lloyd Berry, Miriam Smith, Xantha Radley, C. Ernest Harth.

Scully and Mulder go to small town America to investigate a woman's claim that she has twice been impregnated by a Cher-loving two-faced monster known as "The Great Mutato." The case takes them to a mad scientist who has unlocked the secrets of genetics and seems to have both the ability and the propensity to create monsters. But the truth, in this case, has to do with the heart of a monster who is not really a monster at all.

**103. "A Christmas Carol"** Written by Vince Gilligan, John Shiban and Frank Spotnitz; Directed by Peter Markle; airdate: December 7, 1997; *Guest Cast:* Sheila Larken (Mrs. Scully); Melinda McGraw (Melissa Scully); Pat Skipper (Bill Scully Jr.); Karri Turner (Tara Scully); John Pyper-Ferguson

(Detective Kransky); Gerard Plunkett, Lauren Diewold (Emily); Patricia Dahlquist (Susan Chambliss); Rob Freeman, Eric Brecker (Dark Suited Man #1); Stephen Mendel (Dark Suited Man #2); Walter Marsh (Pathologist); Rebecca Collins (Young Melissa Scully); Joey Shea (Young Dana Scully); Ryan Decker (Young Bill Scully).

During a holiday vacation with the family, Scully receives a mysterious phone call from her dead sister telling her to help a special needs child named Emily. At first, Scully believes that the sickly child is somehow Melissa's, but she comes to realize that Emily is her own child, conceived ... or engineered ... during her abduction three years earlier. Scully initiates an investigation of Emily's foster parents and comes to think that Emily's mother was murdered for some nefarious purpose. When Emily's father is also murdered, Scully realizes that the agents of the conspiracy are involved and have a vested interest in Emily continuing an experimental treatment.

**104. "Emily"** Written by Vince Gilligan, John Shiban, and Frank Spotnitz; Directed by Kim Manners; airdate: December 13, 1997; *Guest Cast:* John Pyper-Ferguson (Detective Kransky); Sheila Larken (Mrs. Scully); Pat Skipper (Bill Scully); Karri Turner (Tara Scully); Rob Morrissey, Gerard Plunkett, Patricia Dahlquist (Susan Chambliss); Lauren Diewold (Emily); Tom Braidwood (Frohike); David Abbott (Judge Matthews); Sheila Patterson (Anna Fugazzi); Erick Brecker (Dark Suited Man #1); Stephen Mendel (Dark Suited Man #2); Tanya Huse (Medical Technician).

Mulder helps Scully adopt her biological daughter, Emily, and also confirms Dana's suspicion that the child is a result of genetic experiments conducted during her abduction. Now Mulder and Scully must dig through the layers of lies to determine why the conspiracy would create and then abandon Emily. When Emily becomes ill, Mulder and Scully learn she has the same toxic composition as alien creatures they have encountered before, which may indicate she is an (unsuccessful) attempt to create an alien-human hybrid. The presence of shapeshifters with murderous intentions further endanger Emily's life.

**105. "Kitsunegari"** Written by Vince Gilligan and Tim Minear; Directed by Daniel Sackheim; airdate: January 4, 1998; *Guest Cast:* Robert Wisden (Pusher/Modell); Diana Scarwid (Linda Bowman); Colleen Winton (Therapist); Scott Oughterson (Orderly); Donna Yamamoto (Asian Agent).

Modell, the "Pusher," is still alive, despite the fatal brain tumor which gives him his telepathic abilities. When Modell escapes from incarceration, Scully and Mulder must catch him before his mental power of suggestion claims any additional lives. Now, it seems, Modell is on a "kitsunegari," a fox (Fox Mulder) hunt.... Or is someone else responsible for the murder of the attorney who prosecuted Modell's case in 1996? The presence of a second pusher, a vengeful one with a purpose, is soon revealed.

**106. "Schizogeny"** Written by Jessica Scott and Mike Wollaeger; Directed by Ralph Hemecker; airdate: January 11, 1998; *Guest Cast:* Chad Lindberg (Bobby Rich); Sarah-Jane Redmond (Karin Matthews); Katharine Isabelly (Lisa); Bob Dawson (Phil Rich); Cynde Harmon (Patti Rich); Laurie Murdoch (Coroner); Myles Ferguson (Joey Agostin); Kate Robbins (Lisa's Aunt); George Josey (Orchard Keeper); Gardner Millar (Mr. Babochi); Christine Anton (Teacher).

Mulder and Scully investigate a case in Michigan in which an abusive stepfather is discovered dead, buried up to his neck in the earth of an orchard. The prime suspect in the crime is his stepson, Bobby, who is in therapy for anger issues. When there is a second murder fast on the heels of the first, and



another purported abused child is involved, Mulder and Scully discover that the therapist is the connection between cases. It turns out that the therapist's father died twenty years ago, in the mud of an orchard as well, and now there is a strange murderous connection between man and nature.

**107. "Chinga"** Written by Stephen King and Chris Carter; Directed by Kim Manners; airdate: February 8, 1998; *Guest Cast:* Susannah Hoffmann (Melissa Turner); Larry Musser (Jack Bonsaint); William MacDonald (Buddy Riggs); Jenny-Lynn Hutcheson (Polly Turner); Henry Beckman, Carolyn Tweedle (Jane Froelich); Dean Wray (Rick Turner); Gordon Tipple (Assistant Manager); Harrison R. Coe (Dave the Butcher); Ian Robison (Ranger); Elizabeth McCarthy (Shopper); Tracy Lively (Clerk); Sean Benbow (Customer).

On a weekend vacation in Maine, Scully runs afoul of a bizarre X-File: a grocery store terrorized by a seemingly demonic force. In this case, the evil seems to originate from a little girl's doll, who "likes to play." The girl herself is deemed autistic, and her mother, the beautiful Melissa Turner, is suspected of being a witch. When dead bodies start to accumulate, the doll, fished up from the bay and infused with occult powers by a coven long ago, becomes Scully's prime suspect.

**108. "Kill Switch"** Written by William Gibson and Tom Maddox; Directed by Rob Bowman; airdate: February 15, 1998; *Guest Cast:* Kristin Lehman (Esther); Bruce Harwood, Dean Haglund, Tom Braidwood (The Lone Gunmen); Patrick Keating (Gelman); Peter Williams (Jackson); Jerry Schram (Boyce); Dan Weber.

An artificial intelligence arranges a "hit" against his creator to prevent the programming genius from inserting a virus (known as a "kill switch") which will destroy the computer's program. Scully and Mulder team with a beautiful blond hacker who has knowledge of the computer's whereabouts, and quickly learn that she and her dead lover had planned to transfer their consciousness, their very souls, into the artificial intelligence. Mulder is captured by the computer and forced to dwell in a horrific virtual reality hospital where the doctors and nurses are definitely lacking a delicate bedside manner.

**109. "Bad Blood"** Written by Vince Gilligan; Directed by Cliff Bole; airdate: February 22, 1998; *Guest Cast:* Luke Wilson (Sheriff Lucius Hartwell); Patrick Renna (Ronnie Strickland); Forbes Angus (Funeral Director); Brent Butt (Coroner).

Mulder, Scully, and the F.B.I. are being sued for \$446 million because Mulder put a stake through a pizza delivery boy's heart in Cheney, Texas (population: 361). Mulder and Scully have different recollections of the case: Mulder believes the boy was a vampire, and Scully suspects the work of cultists. As the agents bicker over their opposing interpretations of the details of their stay in Texas, the staked pizza boy's body disappears from the morgue nearby. Mulder and Scully return to investigate and learn that more than one vampire may be on the loose.

**110. "Patient X"** Written by Chris Carter and Frank Spotnitz; Directed by Kim Manners; airdate: March 1, 1998; *Guest Cast:* Nicholas Lea (Alex Krycek); Laurie Holden (Marita Covarrubias); Veronica Cartwright (Cassandra Spender); William B. Davis (Cigarette Smoking Man); Brian Thompson (Alien Bounty Hunter); Jim Jansen (Dr. Verber); John Neville (The Well-Manicured Man); Chris Owens (Jeffrey Spender); Alex Shostak Jr. (Dmitri); Don S. Williams (Elder); Ron Halder (Dr. Floyd Fazio); Kurt Max Runie (Ranger); John Moore (Second Elder); Raoul Ganeen (Guard); Anatol Rezmeritsas (Commander); Max Wyman (Doctor); Barbara Dyke (Dr. Alepin).

Mulder speaks out against “Patient X,” a woman abductee who is sharing a feel-good message about alien life forms at a UFO panel. Cassandra Spender, the patient in question, believes that there is a war going on among the alien nations and that she is about to be called back, to be abducted. Meanwhile, in Tunguska, alien rebel fighters arrive and incinerate a group of abductees for some mysterious purpose. Another massacre of abductees occurs in America at Skyland Mountain, the site from which Scully was abducted, and Dana finds herself believing Cassandra Spender’s explanation of a cosmic war.

**111. “The Red and the Black”** Written by Chris Carter and Frank Spotnitz; Directed by Chris Carter; airdate: March 8, 1998; *Guest Cast:* William B. Davis (Cigarette Smoking Man); Nicholas Lea (Alex Krycek); Veronica Cartwright (Cassandra Spender); John Neville (Well-Manicured Man); Chris Owens (Jeffrey Spender); Laurie Holden (Maria Covarrubias); Brian Thompson (Alien Bounty Hunter); Don S. Williams (First Elder); John Moore (Second Elder); George Murdock (Third Elder).

Cassandra Spender has been abducted ... again, even as all of her friends and fellow believers are torched to death by alien rebels. Meanwhile, the conspiracy attempts to develop a vaccine against the black oil, using Maria Covarrubias as a guinea pig. Scully acquiesces to hypnotherapy to recall the events of the abduction, as well as the battle on the bridge which took Cassandra from this world.

**112. “Travelers”** Written by John Shiban and Frank Spotnitz; Directed by William A. Graham; airdate: March 29, 1998; *Guest Cast:* Fredric Lane (Young Arthur Dales); Darren McGavin (Arthur Dales); Garret Dillahunt (Edward Skur); Brian Leckner, David Moreland, Eileen Pedde (Mrs. Skur); David Fredericks (The Director); Mitchell Kosterman (Sheriff); Roger Haskett (Coroner); Jane Perry (Dorothy); J. Douglas Stewart (Landlord); Cory Dagg (Bartender); Eric W. Gilder (Old Edward Skur).

In November of 1990, young F.B.I. profiler Fox Mulder tries to piece together the case of a suspected communist/serial killer named Ed Skur. Mulder seeks the assistance of Arthur Dales, a former F.B.I. special agent who investigated “X files,” cases designated unsolved, in the 1940s and 50s. Dales recounts the events of 1952 in which he was hunting Skur, a man believed by HUAC to be a communist, but actually something much worse: an alien-infested host organism! The strange case involved conspiracies, extraterrestrials, and even Mulder’s father.

*Note:* Mulder wears a wedding ring in this episode, a fact which spurred a rash of debate among *X-Files* fans. Was it a blooper, or was the young Mulder of 1990 seen in this episode supposed to be a married man?

**113. “Mind’s Eye”** Written by Tim Minear; Directed by Kim Manners; airdate: April 19, 1998; *Guest Cast:* Lili Taylor (Marty Glenn); Richard Fitzpatrick (Detective Pennuck); Blu Monkuma (Charles Wesley Gotts); Henri Lubatti (Dr. Wilkenson); Peter Kelamis (ADA Costa); Joe Pascual (Examiner); Colin Lawrence (First Cop); Jason Diablo (Angry Man); Verdnika Stocker (Sexy Woman); Dallas Black (Cop).

In Wilmington, Delaware, a blind young woman shows up at a murder scene and is promptly arrested for the bloody crime. Mulder believes that Marty is innocent, and that she possesses some kind of sense which allows her to “see” the crimes of the killers. Scully thinks Marty is an angry, arrogant woman, but Mulder is sure she is just prideful and unwilling to admit that she is handicapped. As the killer strikes again, Mulder discovers a strange link between Marty and the murderer: he killed her mother in 1970 while Marty was still in the womb, and somehow, some way, she became connected to

him.

**114. “All Souls”** Written by Frank Spotnitz and John Shiban; From a story by Billy Brown and Dan Angel; Directed by Allen Coulter; airdate: April 26, 1998; *Guest Cast:* Glen Morshower (Aaron Starkey/The Devil); Jody Racicot, Emily Perkins (Emily); Lauren Diewood, Joseph Patrick Finn, Eric Keenleyside (Lance Kernof); Patti Allan (Mrs. Kernof); Arnie Walters (Father McCue); Lorraine Landry (Pathologist); Tracy Eloffson (Four Faced Man).

Scully seeks forgiveness at church for her role in a bizarre X-File: the strange death of a special-needs girl who seemed more than human. When another, nearly identical, girl dies in the same position of supplication, her eyes burned away by a super powerful light, Scully suspects a supernatural, Christian force may be at work. The dead girls are polydactyl quadruplets who may be nephelem, the hybrid offspring of human and angel. Now, someone is killing these creatures, but is it the heavenly, four-faced seraphim escorting their souls to heaven, or is it the Devil himself, seeking a powerful prize?

**115. “The Pine Bluff Variant”** Written by John Shiban; Directed by Rob Bowman; airdate: May 3, 1998; *Guest Cast:* Daniel Van Barga (Jacob Steven Hailey); Michael MacRae (August Bremer); Sam Anderson (Leemus); J.B. Bivens (Field Agent); Douglas H. Arthurs (Skin-Head Man); John B. Lowe (Dr. Leavitt); Ralph Alderman (Manager); Dean McKenzie (Army Tech); Kate Braidwood (Usherette); Armin Moattar (Goatee Man).

A sting designed to bring down a dangerous terrorist group called “The New Spartans” goes badly, apparently due to Mulder’s unexpected bungling. Scully suspects Mulder’s failure was intentional, and uncovers evidence that her partner is working with the terrorists, who have gained access to a deadly bioweapon: a genetically engineered flesh-eating virus. The terrorists strike again, exposing a movie theater filled with patrons to the deadly toxin, and their next target is a bank. Scully follows Mulder to the heist, in which he participates, uncertain if her partner and friend is really involved with the terrorists, or working under deep cover.

**116. “Folie a Deux”** Written by Vince Gilligan; Directed by Kim Manners; airdate: May 10, 1998; *Guest Cast:* Brian Markinson (Gary Lambert); Dmitri Chepovetsky (Supervisor); Cynthia Preston (Nancy); Brenda McDonald (Loach); John Apicella (Roach).

Mulder gets involved in a hostage situation when an apparently disgruntled telemarketer holds his office at gunpoint, claiming that his boss is an inhuman monster who is turning his co-workers into lifeless zombies. Mulder defuses the situation handily, but soon he has come to believe that the company boss is a monster who “hides in the light.” Scully and Skinner think Mulder has lost his mind, but now Mulder is convinced that the boss, a horrible, insectlike creature who can climb walls and skitter across the ceiling, is coming for him.

**117. “The End”** Written by Chris Carter; Directed by R.W. Goodwin; airdate: May 17, 1998; *Guest Cast:* Jeff Gulka (Gibson); Mimi Rogers (Diana Fowley); William B. Davis (Cigarette Smoking Man); Chris Owens (Agent Spender); John Neville (Well-Manicured Man); Bruce Harwood, Dean Haglund, Tom Braidwood (The Lone Gunmen); Nicholas Lea (Krycek); Don S. Williams (First Elder); George Murdock (Third Elder); John Moore (Second Elder).

A boy with telepathic abilities is the key to all the secrets of the X-Files. He is nearly murdered, and Mulder, Scully and Mulder’s old partner, the beautiful Diana Fowley, are assigned to protect him. The

conspiracy is afraid of the boy, Gibson, however, because they believe he can expose their secrets. Fearing Gibson's powers, they recruit the Cigarette Smoking Man to put an end to him and the X-Files for good.

• *Sixth Season (1998–1999)*

**118. “The Beginning”** Written by Chris Carter; Directed by Kim Manners; airdate: November 8, 1998; *Guest Cast:* William B. Davis (Cigarette Smoking Man); Chris Owens (Spender); Mimi Rogers (Diana Fowley); Jeff Gulka (Gibson); James Pickens, Jr. (AD Kersh); Christopher Neiman, Kim Robillard, Arthur Taxier, Alan Henry Brown, Scott Eberlein, Wendie Malick (Maslin), Don S. Williams (1st Elder); George Murdock (2nd Elder); Rick Millikan (Sandy); Wayne Thomas Yorke (First Workman); Wayne Alexander (AD Arnold); Ralph Meyering, Jr. (Surgeon); Benito Martinez (Orderly).

A worker at Roush Technologies returns from work to his home in Phoenix, Arizona, feeling extreme pain, and before long an alien organism bursts out of his rapidly liquefying body. Back in Washington, D.C., Mulder is brought in before a hostile review committee and asked to defend his work on the newly re-opened X-Files, and worse, he and Scully are ultimately reassigned off the X-Files. Skinner wants to help Mulder and Scully expose the conspiracy and he points them towards the case in Phoenix even as Diana and Spender are officially put on the X-Files. Mulder and Scully race to a nuclear power plant to find the vicious alien lifeform before the conspiracy destroys both it and the truth.

**119. “Drive”** Written by Vince Gilligan; Directed by Rob Bowman; airdate: November 15, 1998; *Guest Cast:* Bryan Cranston (Crump); Michael O’Neill, James Pickens Jr. (AD Kersh); Harry Danner, Junior Brown; Linda Porter (Elderly Woman); Mindy Seeger (Coroner); Scott A. Smith (Prison Doctor); Tim Agee (EMT); Mark Craig (Trooper #1); Wiley Pickett (Trooper #2); Ken Collins (Gas Station Attendant); Tegan West (Navy Lieutenant); Tom Haile (Station Wagon Owner); Frank Buckley (Nevada News Anchor); Bob Peters (Idaho News Anchor); Janine Venable (Vicky Crump); Art Pickering (Germ Suit Cop).

Reassigned off the X-Files by their new AD, Alvin Kersh, Mulder and Scully are out west questioning fertilizer purchasers when there is a deadly highway chase in Elko, Nevada. A woman's head spontaneously explodes after her husband attempts desperately to drive her out of town, and Mulder and Scully investigate the death. The husband soon hears a buzzing in his head and begins to experience the same pounding headache which eventually killed his wife. After an escape from an ambulance, the mad driver kidnaps Mulder and forces him to drive as fast as possible for the West Coast, even as Scully determines that a naval experiment called “Project Seafarer,” which involves low frequency sound surges, may to be blame for turning people into human timebombs.

**120. “Triangle”** Written and directed by Chris Carter; airdate: November 22, 1998; *Guest Cast:* William B. Davis (Cigarette Smoking Man); Chris Owens (Spender); James Pickens, Jr. (AD Kersh); Madison Mason, Trevor Goddard, G.W. Stevens, Greg Ellis, Nick Meaney, Kai Wulff, Tom Braidwood, Dean Haglund, Bruce Harwood (The Lone Gunemen); Wolfgang Gerhard (1st Nazi); Guido Foehrweisser (2nd Nazi); Isaac C. Singleton (1st Roughneck); Laura Leigh-Hughes (Kersh's assistant); Robert Thomas Beck (1st Mate); Robert Arce (Bald-Headed Man); Arlene Pileggi (Skinner's assistant).

While searching for a long lost British luxury liner, the *Queen Anne*, Mulder becomes trapped in the Bermuda Triangle and a bizarre time/space warp. He boards the lost ship only to discover that the crew believes it is still 1939 and, worse, that the vessel has been overtaken by Nazi forces. In this strange reality, the Cigarette Smoking Man is a Nazi commandant, Scully is an American OSS spy, Spender is a gestapo goon, and Skinner is a double agent secretly helping the allies. While Mulder tries to stay alive on the ship, Scully and the Lone Gunmen go to extraordinary lengths to find his exact position and rescue him from the Sargasso Sea trap.

**121. “Dreamland” (Part I)** Written by Vince Gilligan, John Shiban, and Frank Spotnitz; Directed by Kim Manners; airdate: November 29, 1998; *Guest Cast:* Michael McKean (Morris Fletcher); James Pickens Jr. (A.D. Kersh); Nora Dunn (Joanne Fletcher); Scott Allan Campbell (Howard Grodin); Julia Vera (Indian Woman); John Mahon, Michael Buchman Silver, Tyler Binkley (Terry Fletcher); Dara Hollingsworth (Christine Fletcher); Ted White (Attendant); Laura Leigh Hughes (Kersh’s Assistant); Eddie Jackson (Co-pilot/Rock Man); Christopher Stapleton (Pilot); James Yaker (Cashier); Freeman Michaels (Guard); Greg Smith (Soldier).

Mulder and Scully drive by night to a clandestine meeting with a top-secret information source at the fabled Area 51 military base in Nevada, but are apprehended en route by authorities. During the meeting of Majestic and F.B.I, a strange vehicle flies by overhead and Mulder miraculously switches bodies with an unhappily married government man in black named Morris Fletcher. While Mulder tries to get back to his life, Morris turns Fox’s life upside down: putting the make on Scully, purchasing a water bed, and even badmouthing the X-Files! Mulder suspects that the body switch occurred as a result of a top secret plane’s new anti-gravity propulsion drive, but he has no idea how to reverse his condition.

**122. “Dreamland” (Part II)** Written by Vince Gilligan, John Shiban, and Frank Spotnitz; Directed by Michael Watkins; airdate: December 6, 1998; *Guest Cast:* Michael McKean (Morris Fletcher); Julia Vera (Indian Woman); Nora Dunn (Joanne Fletcher); Tom Braidwood, Dean Haglund, Bruce Harwood (The Lone Gunmen); John Mahon, Michael Buchman Silver, Scott Allan Campbell, Andrew Sikking, Chris Ufland, Tyler Binkley (Terry “Terence” Fletcher); Dara Hollingsworth (Christine Fletcher); Mike Rad (Randy); Lisa Joann Thompson (Kelly); Christopher Stapleton (Pilot); Jeffrey T. Unterkofler (1st Air Policeman); James Yaker (Cashier); Nick Lashaway (Young Mulder); Ashlynn Rose (Young Samantha); Bonnie McNeill (Young Tena).

Mulder, still trapped in the body of Morris Fletcher, must find a way to repair the tear in the fabric of the space/time continuum which resulted in the bizarre identity switch. Meanwhile, Morris tries to bed down Scully, which helps her realize that the man who seems to be her partner is really an impostor. A rendezvous at the Little Ale ’n’ Inn near Area 51 in Nevada reunites Mulder and Scully, but now they must reunite his body and soul.

**123. “How the Ghosts Stole Christmas”** Written and directed by Chris Carter; airdate: December 13, 1998; *Guest Cast:* Lily Tomlin (Lida); Edward Asner (Maurice).

On Christmas Eve, Mulder and Scully stake out a haunted house in Maryland with a tragic history: amidst the World War and flu epidemic of 1917, two lovers joined in a suicide pact there. Once inside the dark manor, the doors lock behind them and Scully and Mulder find themselves trapped in a maze of rooms with no way out. Under the rickety floorboards of the library, the duo makes a disturbing discovery: their own rotting corpses. Now Mulder and Scully must escape the house, escape the grim

fate they've witnessed, and survive the interference of two mischievous spirits who are hellbent on making this newest pair of "lovers" a permanent addition to the house.

**124. "Terms of Endearment"** Written by David Amann; Directed by Rob Bowman; airdate: January 3, 1999; *Guest Cast:* Bruce Campbell (Wayne/Ivan Valez/Bud Hasselhoff); Chris Owens (Spender); Lisa Jane Persky (Laura); Michael Milhoan, Grace Phillips (Betsy); Michael Rothaar (Dr. Couvillion); Matthew Butcher (EMT); Lenora May (Ms. Britton); Jimmy Stazkiel (Mr. Ginsberg); Karen Stone (Nurse).

A long-lived demon masquerading in human form continues to pray for a human-appearing baby from one of his many human wives, yet keeps ending up disappointed as sonograms reveal horns and a tail on his upcoming bundle of joy. One night, the demon steals his wife's unborn child in his true, devilish form ... an act which ultimately spurs a police investigation. When Agent Spender, in charge of the X-Files, throws the case into the shredder, Mulder goes rogue to investigate it himself. Mulder thinks he is seeing a classic case of demon fetal harvest and starts to suspect the details of the demon's lovin' and birthin' operation. But Wayne isn't the only devil in town, and one of his neglected (but expectant) wives has her own little agenda.

**125. "Rain King"** Written by Jeffrey Bell; Directed by Kim Manners; airdate: January 10, 1999; *Guest Cast:* Victoria Jackson (Sheila Fontaine); Clayton Rohner (Darryl Mootz); David Manis (Holman Hardt); Dirk Blocker (Mayor Jim Gilmore); Francesca Ingrassia (Cindy); Tom McFadden (Doctor); Dan Gifford (Local News Anchor); Sharon Madden (Motel Manager); Brian D. Johnson (Man); Sally Stevens (Radio Singer).

In dry, drought-ridden Kroner, Kansas, Darryl Mootz is charging the townspeople exorbitant rates to use his "magic" power and cause the rain to fall. In response, Scully and Mulder fly to Kansas to investigate the town, which Mulder refers to as "Ground Zero" for extreme weather conditions. The duo consult a local weatherman, Holman Hardt, about the bizarre meteorological situation and learn that the weatherman's emotional states, particularly his love for a local named Sheila, may be causing Darryl Mootz's success at rain making.

**126. "S.R. 819"** Written by John Shiban; Directed by Daniel Sackheim; airdate: January 17, 1999; *Guest Cast:* Raymond J. Barry (Senator Richard Matheson); John Towey (Kenneth Orgell); Kenneth Tigar (Doctor); Jenny Gago (Doctor); Nicholas Lea (Krycek); Donna Marie Moore (ICU Nurse); Greta Fadness (OR Nurse); Dan Klass (Forensic Tech); Susana Mercedes (Driver); Tim Van Pelt (Young Surgeon); Keith Coulouris (Intern); Arlene Pileggi (Skinner's Secretary); Al Faris (Silk Shirt Man); Jonathan Fraser (Uniformed Cop); Julie Hubert (Exam Room Nurse); Mickie Knox (Trainer).

Skinner hovers near death at the hospital, a victim of an apparently fatal heart attack. As his life ebbs, Skinner recalls the events of the last twenty-four hours, and how he was unknowingly poisoned by a mysterious assailant. Mulder and Scully do their best to save their friend, uncovering a mysterious conspiracy involving an American scientist named Orgell, a Tunisian assassin with diplomatic immunity, and a medical bill called S.R. 819 involving top secret nanotechnology in the Third World. Scully investigates the scientific aspects of Skinner's illness and learns it is an engineered disease building to a catastrophic "vascular event" ... or, in layman's terms, a fatal coronary!

*Note:* The "S" and "R" of the title refer to Senate Resolution number 819.

**127. "Tithonus"** Written by Vince Gilligan; Directed Michael Watkins; airdate: January 24, 1999; *Guest Cast:* Geoffrey Lewis (Alfred Pfelig); Richard Ruccolo (Agent Peyton Ritter); James Pickens, Jr. (AD Kersh); Ange Billman (Secretary); Naomi Matsuda (Hooker); Matt Gallini (Hood); Coby Ryan McLaughlin (Young Agent); Joylon Reese (Second Young Agent); Javier Grajeda (Desk Sergeant); Barry Wiggins (NYPD Detective); Don Feimel (Ambulance EMT); Dell Yount (Truck Driver).

Assistant Director Kersh asks Scully to work with Agent Peyton Ritter, an up-and-coming young agent, on a bizarre case in New York City in which a police photographer somehow manages to photograph crime scenes involving death ... at the moment of death itself. Scully looks into this Johnny-on-the-spot's background and realizes that Alfred Pfelig hasn't aged a day in some fifty or sixty years. Scully interviews the suspect, and he reveals to her how, by sight, he can determine which people will soon expire. Scully disbelieves him until a sidelined Mulder digs up evidence to the contrary and Pfelig relates a personal story: he is one hundred forty-nine years-old and he longs for the angel of death to come for him.

**128. "Two Fathers"** Written by Chris Carter and Frank Spotnitz; Directed by Kim Manners; airdate: February 7, 1999; *Guest Cast:* William B. Davis (Cigarette Smoking Man); Chris Owens (Spender); Nick Tate (Dr. Eugene Openshaw); Nicholas Lea (Krycek); Veronica Cartwright (Cassandra Spender); George Murdock (Elder); Don S. Williams (Elder); Al Ruscio, Frank Ertl, James Newman, Mimi Rogers (Diana Fowley); Damon P. Saleem (Pick-Up Player); Valarie Pettiford (FBI Agent).

After more than twenty-five years of abductions and tests, the conspiracy has finally developed the first healthy human/alien hybrid: Cassandra Spender. On this day of victory, however, the celebration is marred when alien rebels burn the scientists to a crisp. Cassandra Spender, returned from an abduction, asks to speak with Mulder, and Agent Spender acquiesces. Soon, the rebels begin to murder high-ranking conspiracy members, and it looks like the end of an era.

**129. "One Son"** Written by Chris Carter and Frank Spotnitz; Directed by Rob Bowman; airdate: February 14, 1999; *Guest Cast:* William B. Davis (Cigarette Smoking Man); Chris Owens (Spender); Nicholas Lea (Krycek); Mimi Rogers (Diana Fowley); Veronica Cartwright (Cassandra Spender); Laurie Holden (Covarrubias); Tom Braidwood, Dean Haglund, Bruce Harwood (The Lone Gunmen); Don S. Williams (Elder); James Pickens Jr. (Kersh); Peter Donat (Bill Mulder); Al Ruscio, Frank Ertly, Robert Lipton, Scott Williamson (CDC Leader); Jo Black-Jacob (Nurse); Mark Bramhall (Surgical Team Member).

Under the direction of the Cigarette Smoking Man and Diana Fowley, Cassandra Spender is captured by surviving members of the conspiracy and locked away in isolation. Mulder finally discovers the real motivations of the syndicate's conspiracy: it has been stalling on the alien-human hybrid (a slave race) to prevent or at least delay alien colonization, while secretly developing a vaccine to save humanity. The rebels move in and massacre the surviving syndicate members, save for Cigarette Smoking Man and Fowley, who escape the disaster. With the conspiracy finally destroyed, Spender realizes the truth and helps Mulder and Scully get reinstated on the X-Files, an act which results in a surprising murder.

**130. "Agua Mala"** Written by David Amann; Directed by Rob Bowman; airdate: February 21, 1999; *Guest Cast:* Darren McGavin (Arthur Dales); Jeremy Roberts, Joel McKinnon Miller, Diana Maria Riva, Valente Rodriguez, Silas Weir Mitchell, Nichole Pelerine, Max Kasche, Allen Culter

(Roadblock Officer).

Arthur Dales, the first ever X-Files investigator, telephones Mulder from Goodland, Florida, claiming that his neighbors, the Shipleys, have been killed by a tentacled sea monster. Mulder and Scully proceed to the hurricane-ravaged town to investigate the disappearance, but find only empty clothes and a cat (safe and sound in the washing machine) at the crime scene. As the storm worsens, Scully and Mulder seek refuge in the rundown Breakers Condominiums with a very pregnant woman, her henpecked husband, a paranoid survivalist, a looter, and an injured obese deputy who has already faced the monster. As the monster attacks, Mulder speculates that the hurricane has dredged up some heretofore unknown water parasite, a translucent worm from the uncharted depths who can gestate inside a living human host.

**131. “Monday”** Written by Vince Gilligan and John Shiban; Directed by Kim Manners; airdate: February 28, 1999; *Guest Cast:* Carrie Hamilton (Pam); Darren Burrows (Bernard Oates); Suanne Spoke (Woman Customer); Monique Edwards (Head Teller); Arlene Pileggi (Skinner’s Secretary); Wayne Alexander (Older Agent); David Michael Mullins (Tour Guide); Mik Scriba (Lieutenant Kraskow).

A simple trip to the bank ends in terror for Mulder and Scully when they find themselves in a repeating time-loop which ends with both of them dead at the hands of a small-time bank robber named Bernard. Only one person has any knowledge of the temporal flaw: the robber’s girlfriend Pam, and she has tried everything to avert the disaster. As the same gloomy Monday recycles again and again, Mulder develops a strong feeling of déjà vu and starts to suspect that all is not right with his world.

**132. “Arcadia”** Written by Daniel Arkin; Directed by Michael Watkins; airdate: March 5, 1999; *Guest Cast:* Peter White (Gogolok); Abraham Benrubi (Lynn); Debra Christofferson (Cammie); Tom Gallop (Mike); Marnie McPhail, Roger Morrissey, Tim Bagley (Gordy); Tom Virtue (Dave Kline); Juliana Donald (Nancy Kline); Mark Matthews (Mover).

Mulder and Scully pose as a married couple, Rob and Laurie Petrie, so as to get into the Falls at Arcadia, a restrictive, gated community where tenants who have disobeyed the community covenants, contracts, and restrictions end up dead at the hands of some kind of inhuman monster. As Mulder and Scully soon find out, the Falls is guarded by Mr. Gogolok’s strange sentry: a Tibetan “thought” creature brought to life from Gogolok’s subconscious mind. When Mulder purposely flaunts the community’s rules and digs up his front yard (ostensibly for a reflecting pool), the creature reappears.

**133. “Alpha”** Written by Jeffrey Bell; Directed by Peter Markle; airdate March 28, 1999; *Guest Cast:* Andrew J. Robinson (Ian Detweiler); Melinda Culea (Karen Berquist); Thomas Duffy (Jeffrey Kahn); Michael Mantell, David Starwalt, James Michael Connor (Jake Connor); Yau Gene-Chen (Woo); Tuan Tran (Fong); Dana Lee (Yee); Lisa Picotte (Stacey Muir); Mandy Levin (Angie); Treva Togtmeier (Peggy); Adrienne Wilde (Nurse).

A vicious dog from Hong Kong escapes from its container at the docks of San Pedro and goes on a killing spree across the West Coast. The animal was brought to the U.S. by a cryptobiologist who was attempting to preserve an all-but extinct Asian species of “Canid.” To find the scavenging, attacking beast, Scully and Mulder seek the help of an animal behavior specialist, Karen Berquist—a woman who is lacking some social graces and seems to prefer animals to the company of men. Scully thinks



Berquist has arranged the animal's escape to get closer to Mulder, whom she met online previously, but Ian Detweiler, the dog's owner, may be the one with the hidden secret.

**134. "Trevor"** Written by Jim Guttridge and Ken Hawryliw; Directed by Rob Bowman; airdate: April 11, 1999; *Guest Cast:* John Diehl (Pinker Rawls); Tuesday Knight (Jackie); Frank Novak, David Bowe, Catherine Dent, Jeffrey Schoeny (Trevor); Christopher Dahlberg (State Trooper); Robert Peters (Sergeant); Jerry Giles (Security Guard); Keith Brunsmann (Bo); Lamont Johnson (Whaley); Carey Pfeffer (Anchorman); Terri Merryman (Newscaster); Lee Corbin (Guard).

A prisoner escapes from incarceration after a deadly storm, replete with the power to physically walk through walls and other impediments. Worse, bullets also pass right through Pinker Rawls, so there seems to be no way to stop him. Mulder and Scully head off on Rawls' trail, aware that he is on a quest to recover something of incredible significance to him. Mulder and Scully know that if they find the object of Rawls' hunt, they will find Rawls ... but how can they stop a man who can't be killed?

**135. "Milagro"** Written by Chris Carter; Story by John Shiban and Frank Spotnitz; Directed by Kim Manners; airdate: April 18, 1999; *Guest Cast:* John Hawkes (Phillip Padgett); Nestor Serrano (The Stranger); Michael Bailey-Smith, Angelo Vacco, Julian Bach, Casey O'Neil (Cemetery Groundskeeper);

A struggling writer has an obsession for the beautiful agent Scully and moves in next door to Mulder's apartment at the same time that the F.B.I. duo is investigating a series of murders wherein the victims' hearts are removed. The writer sends Scully a lucky charm, a milagro, as Mulder contemplates the notion of psychic surgery, that organs can be removed from living humans via paranormal methods. When Scully makes it plain that she is not interested in the writer, Padgett, he realizes she is already in love with another man: her partner. This realization leads to a violent confrontation where hearts are shattered ... and removed.

**136. "The Unnatural"** Written and directed by David Duchovny; airdate: April 25, 1999; *Guest Cast:* Jesse L. Martin (Josh Exley); Fredric Lane (Young Arthur Dales); Brian Thompson (Alien Bounty Hunter); M. Emmet Walsh (Arthur Dales); Jesse James, Lou Beatty, Jr., Burnell Roques, Lennie Lofton (Coronado); Paul Willson (Ted); Walter T. Phelan, Jr. (Alien); Gabriel Clifton (Black Kid); Al Kaplon (Ump); Rob Reesman (Macon Cop); Danie Duchovny (Piney); Chris Kohn (Catcher); Ken Medlock (White Coach); Julie Griffith (Beautiful Woman); Kerric MacDonald (Moose).

In July of 1947, Negro baseball sensation Josh Exley disappeared in Roswell, New Mexico. Today, Mulder believes that aliens are involved in this disappearance, especially when he sees pictures of an alien bounty hunter in an old newspaper clipping. Mulder visits Arthur Dales, who was a police officer in Roswell in the 1940s, and was assigned to protect Exley from Ku Klux Klan fanatics who wanted to keep white baseball "pure." But, on one dark and rainy night aboard the bus for the Roswell Grays, Dales saw Exley's reflection in a window ... and realized that the famous baseball player was an extraterrestrial.

*Note:* Arthur Dales is usually portrayed by Darren McGavin, but in this case Arthur Dales is portrayed by M. Emmet Walsh. To make matters more confusing, this Arthur Dales (Walsh) is the like-named brother of the other Arthur Dales (McGavin)!

**137. "Three of a Kind"** Written by Vince Gilligan and John Shiban; Directed by Bryan Spicer;

airdate: May 2, 1999; *Guest Cast*: Signy Coleman (Suzanne Modeski); Charles Rocket, John Billingsley, Jim Fyfe, George Sharperson, Michael McKean (Morris Fletcher); Tom Braidwood, Dean Haglund and Bruce Harwood (The Lone Gunmen); Brian Reddy (Big Fritz); Phil Abrams (Little Fritz); Richard Zobel (Al); Jeff Bowser (Redhead Geek); Jason Felipe (Bald Greek); Rick Garcia (News Anchor); Kalena Coleman (Bus Driver).

The Lone Gunmen infiltrate Def Con 1999, a defense contractor's gathering in Las Vegas, in hopes of learning of some new government weapon secrets. On the casino floor, Byers spots the beautiful Suzanne Modeski, the mysterious weapons scientist he first encountered at a convention in 1989. When Byers sees Modeski cooperating with a shadowy government type, he becomes convinced that she is the victim of an advanced mind-control technique. The Lone Gunmen lure an unsuspecting Scully out to Las Vegas to help them learn the truth, and save Suzanne's life.

*Note*: This episode is a sequel to the fifth season entry, "Unusual Suspects."

**138. "Field Trip" (aka "Lies")** Written by Vince Gilligan and Jim Shiban; Story by Frank Spotnitz; Directed by Kim Manners; airdate: May 9, 1999; *Guest Cast*: Mitch Pileggi (Skinner); Robyn Lively (Angela Schiff); David Denman (Wallace Schiff); Jim Beaver, Tom Braidwood, Dean Haglund and Bruce Harwood (The Lone Gunmen).

Two skeletonized corpses are found near Brown Mountain, North Carolina, but the problem is that the bodies (of two hikers) were only out in the woods for three days, a fact which seems to negate the possibility of such massive decomposition. Mulder and Scully make their way to the mountains to investigate and the search takes Mulder into a tiny cave and an encounter with what he believes to be aliens. Reality and fantasy seem to mix, but the truth has more to do with a carnivorous, hallucinogenic fungus than extraterrestrial life forms.

**139. "Biogenesis" (aka "Plans")** Written by Chris Carter and Frank Spotnitz; Directed by Rob Bowman; airdate: May 16, 1999; *Guest Cast*: William B. Davis (Cigarette Smoking Man); Nicholas Lea (Krycek); Mimi Rogers (Diana Fowley); Floyd Crow Westerman (Albert Holsteen); Murray Rubinstein (Dr. Barnes); Michael Chinyamurin (McMellen); Michael Ensign (Sandoz); Sheila Tousey (Native American Nurse); Warren Sweeney (Dr. Harriman); Chet Grissom (Detective); Bill Dow (Chuck Burks); Marty Zagon (Landlord); Samuel Kwaku Minta (Yellingman); Ayd Eyemi (African Man); Benjamin Ocheing (Second African Man).

A strange artifact, a tablet with hieroglyphs on it, is discovered on the Ivory Coast of West Africa. When the tablet proves animate, shattering a Bible, its discoverer brings it to American University in Washington, D.C. There, he is killed and Mulder and Scully search for the stolen tablet, which is reported to carry a message about the purpose of human life on Earth. Worse, Mulder believes his mental equilibrium is being negatively affected by the artifact's mysterious power.

## *American Gothic* (1995–1996)

### CRITICAL RECEPTION

“*Twin Peaks* without conviction ... lots of ominous music in the background, lots of toned-down horror-movie effects in the foreground.”—*Entertainment Weekly*, October 20, 1995, page 52.

“small-town America as an eerie place somewhere between *Mayberry RFD* and *Twin Peaks*.... If the sense of menace sometimes threatens to get a bit campy, that shouldn’t come as a surprise in a project on which two of the executive producers are Sam Raimi and Robert Tapert, the team responsible for ... *Hercules* and *Xena*.—John J. O’Connor, *The New York Times*, September 22, 1995.

“there’s very little that’s domesticated about the *noir American Gothic* ... I am reminded, if not of Kafka, then perhaps of ... S.J. Perelman ... *American Gothic* is the ... unlikely child of Shaun Cassidy, as if that ghost in the birthday cake, David Lynch, had popped out of *The X-Files*. What on unearth will they think up next?”—John Leonard, *New York*, September 25, 1995, page 117.

“*American Gothic* ... benefits from a fine, frightening cast, particularly Gary Cole, who plays Lucas Buck.... Indeed, the players throw themselves into these self-consciously bizarre proceedings as if the show were the inspired work of collaboration between Tennessee Williams and Stephen King ... as if creator Shaun Cassidy ... were trying to mutate *Twin Peaks* and *The Andy Griffith Show* ... *American Gothic* is scary, but not always for the right reasons. Watching a few episodes ... I was struck by one terrifying thing: Cole would be absolutely perfect to play Mark Fuhrman.”—David Wild, *Rolling Stone*: “Television ‘X’-Ploitation,” November 30, 1995, page 79.

### FORMAT

At first blush, Trinity, South Carolina, is a lovely small town. Victorian homes and southern plantations dot the clean, green streets, the sky overhead is always a rich blue, and peace and quiet seem to hang in the air like the scent of honeysuckle. But this southern town harbors a dark and terrifying secret. Its inhabitants live in mortal fear of the town sheriff, one Lucas Buck (Gary Cole), and many of them “owe” him favors for his sometimes helpful/sometimes harmful intervention in town affairs. For Lucas is not just a local “Roscoe,” he may, in fact, be Satan himself.

*American Gothic* is an hour-long CBS drama created by Shaun Cassidy (former pop star, half-brother to David Cassidy, and *Hardy Boys* star) which focuses primarily on Lucas Buck’s seemingly never-ending efforts to win the heart and mind of Caleb Temple (Lucas Black), a precocious and forthright preteen who is, in reality, Buck’s biological son. Caleb is protected from Trinity’s resident evil by the spirit of his dead sister, Merlyn Ann Temple (Sarah Paulson), whom Buck murdered in cold blood at the Temple farm on one dark night. Also on Caleb’s side is Dr. Matt Crower (Jack Weber), a blond Yankee physician and recovering alcoholic, and Caleb’s beautiful cousin Gail Emory (Paige Turco), who believes that Buck is responsible for the death of her parents (local reporters) back in 1976. As the series continues through its twenty-two hour-long episodes, Dr. Crower is replaced in Trinity by a CDC doctor named Peel (John Mese), and Gail finds herself falling (almost against her will) in love with Lucas Buck. On the side of bad with Buck is Ms. Selena Coombs (Brenda Bakke), a sultry

kindergarten teacher with a more-than-healthy sexual appetite, and the heart of a wolf. In one of her first appearances, Coombs was seen playing pool at a bar, and she asked her competitor “rack your balls?” That double-entendre set the mood for her character, and Bakke was a stimulating presence throughout the show.

A story of evil and temptation in the American heartland, *American Gothic* is a soap opera filled with evil portents, ghosts, startling metamorphoses, and violent deaths. The opening credits reflect *American Gothic*'s dual nature. At first, the tranquillity on the surface of life in Trinity is established through picturesque shots of the town, but soon Lucas Buck's “evil” presence dominates the proceedings through a superimposed closeup of the evil man's stone-hard face.

Another highly interesting and high-quality '90s horror series with a sprinkle of *Twin Peaks* and *Dark Shadows* in its brew, *American Gothic* survived just one short season on American network TV before being consigned to an afterlife on the Sci-Fi Channel.

## HISTORY

Few critics may have expected that the director of intense horror fare such as *Evil Dead* (1982), *Evil Dead 2: Dead by Dawn* (1985), *Darkman* (1990), and *Army of Darkness* (1993) would find incredible success as a television producer, but that is exactly what happened to acclaimed genre director Sam Raimi (*The Quick and the Dead* [1995], *A Simple Plan* [1998]) when he masterminded (with his production company Renaissance Pictures and executive producer Robert Tapert) *The Legendary Journeys of Hercules* and *Xena: Warrior Princess* for American syndication. These two series, filmed on location in New Zealand, quickly became the highest rated dramatic programs in syndication, even beating out the previous champion, *Star Trek: Deep Space Nine* (1993-99) by a wide margin. Ironically, Sam Raimi's third TV venture, a show of considerably higher quality than either *Xena* or *Hercules*, did not fare nearly so well when it aired on the CBS network on Friday evenings in the fall of 1995 and the winter of 1996.

The series in question is *American Gothic*, a genre soap opera from creator Shaun Cassidy, later the progenitor of the medieval epic *Roar* (1997) for Fox and the aborted horror-satire *Hollyweird* with director Wes Craven (late of *Nightmare Cafe*, *Scream 2*, *The Music of My Heart* [1999]). Cassidy shocked just about every reviewer and fan in the country by instigating as dark a series as TV had ever seen in its long history, a skewed “heart of darkness” drama as far removed from Cassidy's '70s “pop star” image as possible. The man who had once recorded “Da-Doo-Run-Run” had inexplicably changed course and given birth to perhaps the most evil character to ever “star” in a weekly TV series: Gary Cole's diabolical Lucas Buck.

Though Cassidy openly acknowledged that *Twin Peaks* was an inspiration for his new genre series, he also admitted that he hoped to avoid the pitfalls of that David Lynch series by making the people and plot-points of *American Gothic* a bit easier for the common man to relate to and follow. CBS probably green-lighted the series in the first place because it hoped that it would have an *X-Files*-style hit on its hands. After all, 1995 was the first year of the *X-Files* “clones,” a multiplication which resulted in the production of off-kilter conspiracy and paranormal series such as *Strange Luck* on Fox, *Nowhere Man* on the new UPN and, yes, even *American Gothic* on CBS. To help create a supernatural viewing block, CBS even moved its hit *Picket Fences* from its 10:00 P.M. Friday perch and put *American Gothic* there. That way, viewers could begin the night with *Strange Luck* on Fox at 8:00, continue with *The X-Files* at 9:00, and then hop channels to CBS for *American Gothic* at 10:00 P.M.

All this was immaterial, at first, to Raimi and Cassidy, who rightfully concentrated on creating an original and thought-provoking show rather than a supernatural hit inspired by *The X-Files*. In an interview for *Shivers* magazine in 1996, Sam Raimi explained the method behind Cassidy's madness:

What we're doing is telling a story in a very real town with very real characters. And in this setting, we see elements of the supernatural. We're not doing ghost stories or weird occult-type movies.... It's a story of good and evil in a small town, and evil is embodied in this very attractive, sexy and appealing individual played by Gary Cole.... We will answer questions episode by episode.<sup>1</sup>

Although William Sadler (*Die Hard 2: Die Harder* [1990], *Tales from the Crypt: Demon Knight* [1995]) had been the producer's first choice to play Trinity's evil sheriff, *American Gothic* benefited enormously from Cole's nuanced portrayal of a good ole boy who just happened to be (perhaps) a demon. A charismatic and underrated actor equally capable with comedy (*The Brady Bunch Movie* [1996]), space opera (*Crusade* [1999]), and drama (*Midnight Caller*), Cole proved to be the glue that held the season-long *American Gothic* together. Equally fine in supporting roles were the delicious Brenda Bakke and earnest young Lucas Black (*Sling Blade* [1996], *The X-Files: Fight the Future* [1997]) as little Caleb.

Early reviews of *American Gothic* were complimentary in a grudging fashion, which is about the best a horror show can hope for in a biased media that does not take the genre seriously. The ratings for *Gothic* also started out relatively high with 9.5 million viewers (a 17% share of the audience), but on the following week, the conclusion of the two-part opener garnered only 7.4 million watchers (a 12% share of the audience), and so on, until *American Gothic* was soon the bottom rated show in its time slot, rating under a 10% share of the American viewing audience.<sup>2</sup>

Despite good writing, excellent horror imagery and a fine cast, *American Gothic* was to suffer from the "same old story" which has plagued so much genre programming, specifically a network which was not committed to the show's growth or life on the air. Instead of supporting their new series through its troubled infancy, CBS exercised an uncomfortable degree of control over the show's direction by deciding which episodes should be aired, and even in which order. Since *American Gothic* was a soap opera "serial," with one episode building and hinging on the previous one, this network interference at times rendered the series incomprehensible ... the same complaint that had permeated *Twin Peaks*' later days on the air. For instance, the network failed to air "Potato Boy," a story which revealed a great deal of back story about the character of Selena Coombs. Likewise "The Beast Within," a story that significantly humanized Trinity's deputy Ben Healy (Nick Searcy), was held back (out of order) for months. Even worse than these omissions was the decision not to air "Ring of Fire" at all. This was especially troubling because this episode wrapped up the subplot involving the fate of Gail's parents and was the turning point in the relationship between Emory and Lucas Buck. Without a viewing of this story, audiences were left to wonder how Gail went from hating Buck totally to becoming sexually involved with him. CBS also championed the removal of Jake Weber as Dr. Matt Crower, because the network executives did not like the character. As the outsider in town (a role akin to Rob Morrow's in *Northern Exposure*), Crower provided a much needed perspective, but Weber was dismissed from the series only to be replaced by another doctor who served essentially the same purpose but had even less time to be adequately developed. Though Sam Raimi and Shaun Cassidy had intended to bring Weber and Crower back in a second season, that opportunity never arose.

As if all of this interference in cast and episode order was not enough, CBS showed no confidence in *American Gothic* by allowing it to air only twelve times before pulling it from the Friday night schedule. Thus one of the most highly touted (and well-reviewed) new series of the season was basically a thing of the past by the end of January of 1996. CBS halfheartedly gave *American Gothic* a second chance by “dumping” its remaining episodes during a single week in July of 1996. With little advance publicity of this *American Gothic* “marathon,” even the core audience who had stuck loyally with the series up to that point did not know to look for it during this bizarre scheduling. Instead, the ratings remained low, and CBS had all the excuses it needed to cancel the series before the start of a second season. Why did CBS produce this top-of-the-line, generously budgeted horror show only to abandon it once it began airing? Robert Tapert knew of at least one reason:

There was a shift in regimes at CBS and the new people coming in didn't like it. It never aired three weeks in a row without a pre-emption or a time move, and if you do that to a show you'll kill it.<sup>3</sup>

*American Gothic* suffered the same fate as all 1990s pretenders to *The X-Files* throne. Like *Nowhere Man*, *Strange Luck*, *Kindred: The Embraced* (1996), *Dark Skies* (1996), *The Burning Zone* (1996), *Prey* (1998), and *Strange World* (1999), it died after just a season on the air. Despite this ignominious fate, *American Gothic* is arguably the most original and most artistic of this aforementioned failed series' stable.

In its short time on the air, *American Gothic* did develop a fan following, and it watched with interest as the Sci-Fi Channel purchased the show and set about repairing much of the contextual damage caused by CBS's interference. On the Sci-Fi Channel, *American Gothic* episodes were run in the order intended by Raimi and Cassidy, and the remaining unaired shows were also seen for the first time. *Gothic* also managed to make a huge splash overseas, especially in Great Britain, where it was appreciated as a unique addition to horror tele-fantasy. The opening episode even merited the number 3 spot in *Cult TV's* top twenty (ever) scariest cult TV moments.

After *American Gothic* folded, Gary Cole went on to play Mike Brady in a second *Brady Bunch* film for Paramount, to star in the ill-fated sequel to *Babylon 5* called *Crusade*, and to appear as the strong, silent villain in Sam Raimi's Oscar nominated 1998 picture *A Simple Plan* with Billy Bob Thornton and Bill Paxton. *The X-Files* (1997) feature film was notable for reuniting two *American Gothic* stars: Lucas Black (Caleb) and Chris Fennell, who had played Caleb's friend Boone in several episodes.

## CRITICAL COMMENTARY

Shaun Cassidy and Sam Raimi's *American Gothic* is one of those rare modern terror TV shows (like Chris Carter's *Millennium*) which seems to be constructed not only for entertainment and business purposes, but for artistic reasons as well. Just as *Millennium* is filled with symbols (such as Frank Black's perfect yellow house), so is *American Gothic* rigorously faithful to its literate-sounding title. To wit, it is a modern Gothic romance set in the United States. The discussion of the Gothic influence on television sometimes falls into woefully imprecise terms these days. A dramatic series cannot be labeled as Gothic simply because of like-named architecture or because a long-haired heroine in flowing white robes is seen racing down darkened corridors in flickering lights. On the contrary, it should be remembered that the Gothic movement in literature was designed as a response, a negative reaction actually, to the age of reason known as the Enlightenment. It is only appropriate then that *American Gothic*, a Gothic adventure, follows *The X-Files* on the air quite closely, for it too can be

viewed as a reaction, a pointed contrast, to the scientific world of *The X-Files*.

*The X-Files*, perhaps the best terror TV series of all time, espouses a rigorous devotion to specific Enlightenment mores and tenets. Although horrible monsters, diseases, aliens, and the like are known to exist in Chris Carter's universe, they are almost universally catalogued successfully by the reach of science (in the form of Dana Scully). The disease of "F. Emasculata," the mutants of "Teliko," "The Host," "2Shy" and "Agua Mala," and even the fungal life form of "Field Trip," are ultimately explained not through religion, spiritual, or even romantic terms, but through rational explanations transmitted through the auspices of scientific knowledge, scientific deduction and/or extrapolation. In other words, *The X-Files* is an Enlightenment-style show because it preaches (to a certain extent) the worldview of Darwin or any other "rationalist"; specifically that the world can be explained in empirical, reasonable terms and even bizarre anomalies (such as man-sized fluke worms) can be legitimately verified through a basic understanding of biology, endocrinology, immunology, whathaveyou. Though Mulder is a "believer" not a medical doctor, he is also a scientist of a specific sort. He is a psychologist who seeks to understand the world through that particular branch of science and understanding. Mulder may be more imaginative than Scully in his deductions, but he employs the tools of science (whether it be his own experience with psychology, or Scully's lectures in biology and medicine) to make a daring deduction about something heretofore unknown (such as an ancient sea monster washed inland, or a prehistoric lifeform living in trees). Mulder is not *anti* science, he just utilizes science as a jumping board to new frontiers, new understandings, a leap that Scully is not always willing to accept.

*American Gothic* is quite different in its approach to horror. There is little or no science in this show, and even less explanation. The series never states flat out that Lucas is the devil, or that the devil even exists. It does not attempt to explain Merlyn's existence as a ghost, or Caleb's dark internal power. It is a Gothic imagining that rebels against the rationalism of shows such as *The X-Files* by being purposefully enigmatic. More importantly, *American Gothic* fits all the criteria of a Gothic romance. In no particular order, it fulfills the following fundamental "Gothic" rules.

To start, *American Gothic* is a passage from mundane reality to a dark region governed by a supernatural, evil being. Matt Crower leaves Boston a shattered man only to move to beautiful Trinity, South Carolina. There he discovers that Lucas Buck, a figure of strange abilities and allegiances, influences and rules the town with his dark powers. As in Bram Stoker's *Dracula*, evil predominates in this town, and Lucas Buck, like the count, is the center of the action in the series. Buck, as portrayed by Cole, is alluring and repulsive at the same time. He is capable of great evil at the same time that he is charismatic and charming. These are essential characteristics of any Gothic romance (and villain). Accordingly, there are several episodes of *American Gothic* ("Doctor Death Takes a Holiday," "The Buck Stops Here" come to mind immediately) in which people attempt to slay the beast, Lucas Buck, just as Dracula himself is eventually dispatched.

Secondly, *American Gothic* features a heroine (Gail Emory) who comes to Trinity to fulfill two qualities of the Gothic heroine. Firstly, she explores dark family secrets, digging deep into the mysteries of the town and her own lineage, not unlike Victoria Winters in either version of *Dark Shadows*. As Buck says of her quest (in "Ring of Fire"): "The secret history of the South is hidden in blood ... history, family, genealogy." What could be more Gothic than this belief that the past infects the present, creating a kind of "secret history" in which the trials and griefs of the dead still cast a pall over the living?

Perhaps more importantly, Gail (a beautiful woman, naturally) finds herself simultaneously attracted to and repelled by Lucas Buck and the power he wields. She despises him on the one hand for his involvement in murder and the seduction of the innocent, but by the end of the short-lived series she is mourning his death (“The Buck Stops Here”) and carrying his child! In Gothic imaginings, evil is always a two-faced character: beautiful and ugly at the same time, and the lady of the piece is always drawn to it like a moth to a flame. Gail fits this traditional role perfectly. On a side-note, Merlyn, in her white flowing dress, does fulfill the Gothic’s visual need to have a beautiful heroine in long gown running about.

Thirdly, *American Gothic* lives up to the memory of Gothic imaginings and literature by featuring a world where death and decay are always close by. Rotting corpses abound in episodes such as “Rebirth” and “Meet the Beetles,” and the latter show even concerns a species of insects capable of destroying a human body in seconds. Bodies, bones, skulls, coffins, even a deadly plague—all symbols of mortality and rot—feature prominently in “A Tree Grows in Trinity,” “The Plague Sower,” and “To Hell and Back.” In “Ring of Fire,” dead bodies rise menacingly from their graves to point accusing fingers at their murderers. It is as if Lucas has cast a deadly shadow over his town, bringing death and destruction to its beautiful visage. Even when death is not physically represented by such symbols of decay, its presence is felt in almost tangible terms. In “Resurrector,” Caleb throws a “going away” party for the “dead,” establishing that Trinity is a town where the past lives, and the dead could very well be visitors at your bed and breakfast (as another prominent dead person, the Boston Strangler, turns out to be in “Strangler”).

Lastly, *American Gothic* finds a successful U.S. metaphor for the Gothic period in literature. Originally, the late 18th century and early 19th century was the heyday of the Gothic romance, and the movement featured the crumbling castles and ruins of Europe as its primary setting. *American Gothic* transplants this exotic locale to the post-Civil War American South, a world where farms and southern plantations are essentially the “crumbling castles” of another culture. Rusting bridges (in “Rebirth”), forgotten bungalows (in “Ring of Fire”), and even the count’s castle (Buck’s home) also echo Gothic settings of old. In particular, Buck’s house is shown to be a vast, cold place with a seemingly endless, narrow, staircase stretching up and up. Shadows line the walls, and the house’s interior is filmed in off-kilter angles to suggest the corruption of its owner. This domicile is the modern day equivalent of Collinwood Manor, or the House of Seven Gables. And, importantly, it is here, in evil’s domain, that the final conflict between Buck and his would-be heir, Caleb, is fought in “Requiem.”

The other half of the title *American Gothic* deals specifically with locale, with America, rather than with story genre, and *American Gothic* does not neglect the fact that it has transplanted its story of evil’s allure to the New World. Thus the series manages to explore several American ideas and truisms in its short run. The concept that “nothin’ is for free” is nowhere better exemplified than in Buck’s Trinity, where a favor given always costs a favor in return. The transient nature of American life, the fact that people move from city to city, is exemplified by the heroes of *American Gothic*. Matt Crower is a Yankee from Boston and Gail Emory grew up in Charleston, but the American lifestyle, coupled with fate, brings them to Trinity and a rendezvous with the evil that has already touched their lives (through the death of loved ones, through alcoholism, etc.).

If the title *American Gothic* is examined, it can be seen as a perfect reflection of the series’ content and themes. In the same vein, the name of the town where all the action is centered is equally symbolic and relevant to any examination of the series. “Trinity” is the center of a trinity, all right.



The series focuses on the three-way battle and bond between a father (Lucas Buck), a son (Caleb Temple), and a spirit (Merlyn). Such a set-up may sound simplistic, even trite, but *American Gothic* manages to dramatize all sides of this unusual triangle, sometimes in very different lights. Merlyn is not always the ethereal symbol of beauty and goodness. Sometimes she crosses the line of evil herself, by stealing an innocent life in “Rebirth,” and by fostering a deadly disease in “The Plague Sower.” Even Caleb is not the perpetual “innocent” of this complex story. He is tempted to use his own dark force in episodes such as “Strong Arm of the Law,” “Strangler,” and “Requiem.” Whether this bubbling fountain of evil is a result of Caleb’s genetic makeup asserting itself, a reflection of his ascendance to manhood (and concurrent departure from a Paradiselike state of grace) or simply his very human failure to resist temptation and sin, is not clearly defined, yet *American Gothic* artfully allows all such readings as a possibility. The “trinity” of Trinity is part of the show’s initial blueprint, its design, and its makeup is examined in many installments of the series.

*American Gothic* has a literary basis beyond the Gothic movement as well. The series is designed as an updating of the Faust legend. In virtually every episode, a needy townsman is shown making a deal with Buck, a bargain with Trinity’s Mephistopheles. Buck plays on greed in “Inhumanitas” to undo a materialistic yuppie with whom he has made a real estate deal. Buck plays on the marital jealousy and lust of a radio personality in “Resurrector” to undo his bid for success in television. What remains so notable (and praiseworthy) about the Faustian structure of *American Gothic* is that it extends well beyond the rotating guest cast. In other words, Buck manipulates not only the expendable character and guest performer of the week, he works his evil magic on series regulars. He exploits Dr. Crower’s guilty feelings and desire for oblivion in “To Hell and Back.” He capitalizes on Gail’s desire to know the truth in “Ring of Fire,” making a deal with the reporter which will bring her, ultimately, to his bed. In this case, Buck makes his intentions perfectly clear. In a moment of rare honesty he tells Gail that he “doesn’t actually give,” he “deals.” These Faustian bargains (later handled with comedic flair in *G vs E* [1999]) form the foundation of *American Gothic*’s ongoing storyline.

Ironically, the only person Buck cannot make a deal with in the series is his own son, Caleb. The Temple boy manages to avoid the seduction of money (the root of all evil) in “Strong Arm of the Law,” as well as the promise of material possessions in “Dead to the World.” In these early shows, Caleb represents incorruptible innocence. He exists in a state where he understands right from wrong, almost innately.

The horror imagery of *American Gothic* is second to none. This is a very scary show, and one that does not pull its punches. A fallen priest shoots up heroin in his church quarters in “Potato Boy.” That sequence of vile drug use is relentlessly cross-cut with the sanctified symbols of the Catholic faith including the crucifix and idols of Jesus and Mary. As in the best of terror TV programming, ideas are conveyed visually in *American Gothic*, and this sequence of contrasts (a holy man committing a sin on church grounds) exposes the hypocrisy of religion in general and specifically of the misguided belief that a man, any man, can be above sin or temptation.

Other moments and episodes are equally provocative (which might be the reason why “Potato Boy” and other shows never got air time on network TV). In “Damned if You Don’t,” Lucas exacts the nastiest revenge imaginable against a man who has failed him. Once, a long time ago, a fella named Carter was saved by Lucas after he diddled another man’s young (underage) daughter. After failing to help Lucas on another task, Lucas sees to it that an ex-con is released from prison so as to seduce Carter’s teenage daughter. This show is unabashedly about sex, and about sex of a particularly

forbidden variety—with a minor, specifically. This barely concealed subtext comes to life in a vivid scene involving, of all things, an orange ice pop. While luxuriating on a front porch, the ex-convict lovingly dips a phallic-shaped orange ice-pop into the teen’s sensuous mouth (in closeup!). He tells her to open up and that licking the pop “is the best of all.” The beautiful young girl, with full red lips and a wild mane of auburn hair, does exactly as the convict asks ... before being interrupted by her horrified father. This none-too-subtle representation of fellatio may be a wee bit explicit for some, but it demonstrates how *American Gothic* took chances and reflected its storyline with visual reinforcement. The teleplay itself tip-toed around the notion of sex with a minor, but this brief scene brought the point home in a succinct, visual manner. Any father who saw that sequence understood immediately the terror that Carter felt upon witnessing the ice-pop moment.

In another show (“Meet the Beetles”), Caleb digs up his own grave and finds a twisted, demonic version of himself lurking there. Besides being quite a shock, this horror image is a riff on the old (and Gothic!) concept of the doppelganger, the villainous “other.” The idea of an evil double is interesting in *American Gothic* because one has the distinct sense that the demonic Caleb, discovered both literally and symbolically beneath the surface, represents or foreshadows the future. After all, Caleb is not yet dead so he cannot be digging up his past here. Instead, he is unearthing a glimpse of his future, an evil future fully realized in shows such as “The Buck Stops Here” and “Requiem.”

Amid all the Gothic conceits and horror imagery, *American Gothic* manages, amazingly, to be funny at the same time that it is scary. The dialogue is unabashedly wicked in spots. Brenda Bakke, in particular, has fun with the role of the town femme fatale. In “Meet the Beetles” she is accosted by a lustful swimming instructor poolside. She spurns his advances and he croaks: “What am I supposed to do here by myself?!” Without batting an eye, Selena replies succinctly: “stroke.” That kind of perverse humor typifies *American Gothic*’s approach to life. It can be deadly serious, or straight-out funny. Although some moments do border on camp, such as the notorious moment in the pilot wherein Lucas Buck whistles the theme song to *The Andy Griffith Show*, the serious tone of the series is rarely compromised for an easy laugh.

*American Gothic* is one of the ten best horror TV shows of the contemporary age (1970-99) because it features a powerful anti-hero beautifully portrayed by Gary Cole, because it was designed from the outset to be symbolic and thus artistic (with Gothic imagery and tenets embroidered throughout the format), but mostly because it is a parable about human failings. Lucas Buck uses “the American dream” to destroy the souls of his enemies, and he has been heard on more than one occasion to state that “free will is an illusion” (“Meet the Beetles,” “Triangle”). In its depiction of a world controlled by evil, where men and women labor under the notion that they have a choice in their fate, *American Gothic* is one of the most daring, and best realized morality plays of recent memory.

## CAST AND CREDITS

*Cast:* Gary Cole (Sheriff Lucas Buck); Jack Weber (Dr. Matt Crower); Lucas Black (Caleb Temple); Paige Turco (Gail Emory); Brenda Bakke (Selena Coombs); Sarah Paulson (Merlyn Temple); Nick Searcy (Ben Healy); John Mese (Dr. Peel).

*Credits:* Created by: Shaun Cassidy. Music: Joseph LoDuca. Co-Producer: Judi Ann Mason. Coordinating Producer: Dean Barnes. Producers: Edward Ledding, David Eick. Supervising Producer: Shaun Cassidy. Directors of Photography (various episodes): Stephen McNutt. Editors (various episodes): Brian L. Chambers, Thomas R. Moore, Chuck Weiss. Executive Producers: Sam

Raimi, Robert Tapert. *Unit Production Manager*: Ric Rondell. *First Assistant Director*: Thomas Zapata. *Second Assistant Director*: Stefania Girloami Goodwin. *Post-Production Supervisor*: Billy Crawford. *Sound Supervisor*: Chris Harrengt. *Production Coordinator*: Eleanor Hemingway. *Music Editor*: Patty Von Ark. *Art Director*: Geoffrey S. Grimsman. *Set Decorator*: Tim Stepeck. *Property Master*: Richard Waldrop. *Construction Coordinator*: Barry Spencer. *Costume Designer*: Peggy Farrell. *Makeup*: Jeff Goodwin. *Hairstylist*: D. Michelle Johnson. *Script Supervisor*: Christine Moore. *Sound Mixer*: Richard Van Dyke. *Gaffer*: Stephen Thompson. *Key Grip*: Mark R. Smith. *Visual Effects Supervisor*: Kevin O'Neill. *Stunt Coordinator*: Gregg Smrz. *Location Manager*: Brad Smith. *Transportation Coordinator*: Lee Siler. *Special Effects Coordinator*: Michael Schora. *Location Casting*: Fincannon and Associates. *Original Casting* Liberman/Hirschfeld Casting, CSA. From Renaissance Pictures. Distributed through Universal Television, an MCA Company.

## EPISODE GUIDE

*Note*: CBS made mincemeat of the *American Gothic* ongoing plotline by airing episodes out of order, and not airing several episodes of the series at all ... thus creating story gaps. The episode guide below reflects the order in which the episodes *should* have been aired. It is this sequence of shows which is now considered canon, and aired on the Sci-Fi Channel.

**1. "Pilot"** Written by Shaun Cassidy; Directed by Peter O'Fallon; airdate: September 22, 1995; *Guest Cast*: Lynda Clark (Rita Barber); Michael Burgess (Dan Truelane); Margo Moorer (Danielle Davenport); Lucius Houghton (Deputy Cammalous); Troy Simmons (Josh Davenport); Tammy Arnold (Caleb's Mother); McKenzie LaCross (6-year-old Merlyn); Leonard Watkins (Blind Man); Tamara Dows (Nurse Wendy).

On a rainy night on the outskirts of the South Carolina town called Trinity, young Caleb Temple flees his home as his father attacks his older sister, Merlyn, an autistic teen who won't stop repeating that "there's someone at the door." The authorities soon arrive and Sheriff Lucas Buck kills Merlyn in secret and frames her father for the crime. At the hospital later, Lucas Buck demands custody of Caleb, but the boy is protected by Dr. Matt Crower, a transplanted Yankee with a history of alcoholism. Buck tries to manipulate Caleb's father into giving him full, solitary custody of the boy, but Caleb's cousin, Gail Emory, arrives in town and squashes the sheriff's plot.

**2. "A Tree Grows in Trinity"** Written by Shaun Cassidy; Directed by Michael Katleman; airdate: September 29, 1995; *Guest Cast*: Arnold Vosloo (Rafael "Sol" Santo); Ron Perkins, Michael Burgess (Dr. Daniel Trulane); David Linthall (Curtis Z. Webb); Gina Stewart (Teapot); Mert Hatfield (The Reverend); Sean Bridgers (Deputy #1); Charles McLawhorn (Albert); Dale Wright (Nurse); Charly Williams (Taylor); Ralph Bronewell (Orderly #1).

After Caleb's house burns down, Gail Emory and Sheriff Buck meet and try to find him. Buck was the person who found the corpses of Gail's parents in a mysterious fire some twenty years ago, and Gail suspects foul play. Meanwhile, Deputy Ben worries that the coroner's exam of the dead Gage Temple (Caleb's father) will reveal that his monogrammed pen (stolen by Lucas) was the murder weapon. The coroner, who works for Lucas Buck, falsifies the autopsy reports on Merlyn and Gage's deaths so as to hide Buck's involvement.

**3. "Eye of the Beholder"** Written by Judi Ann Mason; Story by Shaun Cassidy and Judi Ann Mason; Directed by James Charleston; airdate: October 6, 1995; *Guest Cast*: N'Bushe Wright (Sheryl Tulane);

Michael Burgess (Daniel Tulane); Tina Lifford (Laurice Holt); Bob Hanna (Judge Harris Halpern); Rick Warner (Heywood Anderson); Chris Fennell (Boone); Grenoldo Frazier (Reverend Logan); Barry Bell (Gordy Wills); Evan Rachel Wood (Rose Russell); Maria Howell (Choir Soloist).

Sheriff Buck now has Caleb in his temporary custody, but young Caleb is none too happy about it. When Caleb expresses his desire to live with Dr. Crower, Buck causes Crower's newest patient to go crazy on the operating table. Lucas also blackmails Daniel, Crower's assistant, into testifying against the doctor at Caleb's custody hearing. Buck gives Daniel's wife a special mirror which arouses her and transforms her into a sexually hyped-up Narcissus.

**4. "Damned If You Don't"** Written by Michael R. Perry and Stephen Gaghan. Directed by Lou Antonio; airdate: October 10, 1995; *Guest Cast:* Muse Watson (Carter Bowen); Brigid Walsh (Poppie); Steve Rankin (Sutkin); Judy Simpson Cook (Etta Bowen); Barnaby Carpenter (T.J.); Chris Fennell (Boon); Troy Simmons (Josh); John Henry Scott (Janitor); Donald S. Bland (Cooper); Juliet Cesario (Gail's Mother); Jana Drue (Young Gail).

Lucas Buck visits Carter Bowen, the town mechanic, to collect on an old favor: in exchange for past help during a crisis, the sheriff wants Carter's lovely 15-year-old daughter, Poppie, to "assist" him at the office. When Carter fails to comply with the terms of their arrangement, Lucas sees to it that Mrs. Bowen is electrocuted. Meanwhile, Lucas also helps Caleb with his science project, a miniature tornado, even though Merlyn thinks Caleb should accept no help from Buck. In the Bowen junkyard, Gail finds the car her parents owned when they died, and Lucas makes another deal with Carter, one involving a particularly nasty sort of revenge concerning Poppie, and a sex-starved ex-con from Carter's past.

**5. "Dead to the World"** Written by Robin Green, Mitchell Burgess, Shaun Cassidy, Michael R. Perry and Stephen Gaghan; Directed by James Contner; airdate: October 13, 1995; *Guest Cast:* Linda Pierce, Melissa McBride, John Shearin, Lee Norris, Helen Baldwin (Barbara Joy Flood); Rachel Seidman-Lechmany (Charlotte); Troy Simmons (Josh); Barnaby Carpenter (T.J.); Alex Van (Jailer); Scott Schumacher (Diver); Debbie Yates (Louellen).

Gail learns that an old friend, a nurse named Holly Gallagher, died in Trinity ten years ago ... while dating Lucas Buck. Meanwhile, Ben discovers that his ex-wife and son are being beaten by Whalen, the new man in their lives. Caleb practices for an archery contest over Merlyn's objections, who worries that her brother is becoming too violent and too eager to win. Gail tries to uncover the truth about Holly's fate by demanding that the car she died in be pulled from the river ... but the car is empty, and more questions are raised.

**6. "Potato Boy"** Written by Michael Nankin; Directed by Nick Marck; unaired; *Guest Cast:* Tina Lifford (Miss Holt); Trip Cogburn (Potato Boy); Zander Heinen (Potato Boy Vocals); Sara Lynn Moore (Mrs. Russell); Chris Fennell (Boone); Evan Rachel Wood (Rose Russell); John Inscoe (Dr. Perry).

Caleb and his friends trade apocryphal stories about a run down old house in the neighborhood rumored to be the home of an abomination called "The Potato Boy." Merlyn assures Caleb that the Potato Boy is no monster, but a human being with a pure and innocent soul. Meanwhile, Buck tells Caleb that he wants to be his mentor, even while Ben struggles with his own apprenticeship under the sheriff. When Ben reveals to his therapist that Sheriff Buck murdered Merlyn Temple, Lucas has to

use a little bit of “reverse” psychology to keep his secret safe.

**7. “Meet the Beetles”** Written by Victor Bumbalo and David Chisholm; Story by Victor Bumbalo, David Chisholm and Shaun Cassidy; Directed by Michael Nankin; airdate: October 20, 1995; *Guest Cast*: Bruce Campbell (Lt. Dre); Keith Flippen, Mark Joy, David Lenthall, Chris Fennell (Boon); Selden Smith (Lydia Constantine); Alex Van (Deputy Floyd); Derin Altay (Betty Weller).

By night, Caleb returns to the burned-out shell of his old house, only to discover a skeleton beneath the destroyed floorboards. The corpse belongs to Haskell Weller, a Trinity man who had a lust for Selena, but the odd thing is that he died only three days ago ... not nearly enough time for all his flesh to be stripped away. A paleontologist suggests to Gail that a local breed of beetles capable of cleaning (by devouring) a human body in seconds, may be the culprit. Meanwhile, Caleb is bribed by Sheriff Buck with \$30,000 to live at the sheriff’s new palatial home ... which is to be built on Caleb’s old farm.

**8. “Strong Arm of the Law”** Written by Michael R. Perry and Stephen Gaghan; Directed by Mike Binder; airdate: November 3, 1995; *Guest Cast*: Matt Craven (Barrett); Richard Edson (Lowell Stokes); Joseph Lindsey (Earl); Jim Gloster (Eddie); Chris Fennell (Boon); Dean Whitworth (Cecil Perkins); Mert Hatfield (Minister); Audrey Dollar (Janice); Sarah Lynn Moore (Carol).

Caleb peers into the window of a neighbor, Will Hawkins, only to see him being drowned in his bathtub by four men in ghoulish pig masks. When Lucas learns that someone is squeezing the Trinity business community on behalf of a false organization called the Retired Sheriff’s Home of America, he realizes that the four strangers in town are muscling in on his populace and his territory. Buck erects a nasty revenge for these newcomers to Trinity, and proves definitively who is boss.

**9. “The Beast Within”** Written by Shaun Cassidy; Directed by Michael Lange; airdate: July 3, 1996; *Guest Cast*: Jeff Perry (Artie); Lynda Clark (Rita); Rick Forrester (Salesman); Henry Laurence (Elderly Man); General Fermon Judd Jr. (Fireman).

Ben’s brother Artie holds up a video store, and Lucas and Ben attempt to apprehend him. Artie is shot during the confrontation but he nonetheless makes Buck his hostage as he is tended to by Dr. Crower at the hospital. With Caleb, Crower, Buck, and Gail endangered by his brother, Ben must now play the hero to save his friends and his brother’s life. The stakes are especially high because Artie is wired with explosives, and Buck is ready to take the matter into his own, evil, hands at any moment.

**10. “To Hell and Back”** Written by Judi Ann Mason and Robert Palm; Directed by Oz Scott; airdate: July 3, 1996; *Guest Cast*: W. Morgan Sheppard (Mr. Emmett); Andi Carnack (Doreen); Chris Fennell (Boone); Michael Burgess, Robert Treveiler, Laura Robbins, Charles McLawhorn.

When a drunk driver and his wife, Doreen, are rushed to the hospital following a terrible accident, Dr. Crower relives a similar experience from his own life in which his wife and his daughter were killed. Meanwhile, Caleb gossips about his neighbor, an old man who howls at the moon and seems to be burying bones in his backyard. As a long night at the hospital progresses, Matt is haunted by visions of his dead wife and daughter. With Crower in a weakened state, Buck makes him a deal: he’ll give the doctor a second chance to make things right with his wife and daughter, as well as the comfort of oblivion, all to keep Crower out of Trinity forever.

**11. “Rebirth”** Written by Victor Bumbalo and Robert Palm; Story by Victor Bumbalo; Directed by James Frawley; airdate: January 3, 1996; *Guest Cast:* Danny Masterson (Ray); Amy Steel (Christie); Sarah Lynn Moore (Mrs. Russell); Chris Blackwelder (Young Man); Kelly Mizell (Young Woman); Deborah K. Winstead (Nurse #1); Lanelle Markgraf (Nurse #2); Michael Mattison (Dead Head); Randell Haynes (Sourpuss).

Gail’s expectant friend Christie is in Trinity for a visit when Merlyn steals her baby’s soul so as to return to Earth as a human teenager and feel the emotions and connections she missed as a human mortal. Though Caleb begs Merlyn to return to the land of the dead so Christie’s baby might live, Merlyn has fallen in love with a handsome biker rebel named Ray, and does not want to go back. Sheriff Buck is watching Ray closely already and now he is doubly suspicious of the “mystery” girl in town who resembles Merlyn Temple. Merlyn and Buck prepare for a fateful showdown, while Ray is alarmed to discover the real fate of Merlyn.

**12. “Ring of Fire”** Written by Michael R. Perry and Stephen Gaghan; Directed by Lou Antonio; unaired; *Guest Cast:* Collin Wilcox Patton, Sonny Shroyer, Sandi Fix (Christine Emory); John Keenan (Peter Emory); Jana Drue (Young Gail); Dorothy Recasner Brown (Female Doctor); David Cutting (Toddler).

Plagued by dreams of a tragic past, Gail is compelled to discover the precise circumstances in which her parents died (or were killed). To help Gail discover the truth, she enlists Sheriff Buck, the man she deems culpable. Buck “escorts” Gail into a vision of her past in which she sees her parents hiding an important document, and then, in reality, Buck takes Gail to the house where the document remains hidden ... and a family secret is finally revealed.

**13. “Resurrector”** Written by Shaun Cassidy, Michael R. Perry and Stephen Gaghan; Directed by Elodie Keene; airdate: January 10, 1996; *Guest Cast:* Greg Travis (Mel Kirby); Irene Ziegler (Gloria Kirby); Tina Lifford (Miss Holt); Chris Fennell (Boone); Lynda Clark (Rita); Philip Lock (Lance Biggs); Andrea Powell (Jean Biggs); Craig Edwards (Technician).

A Trinity radio personality wants to move up to a TV gig, and he seeks Lucas’s help in making the transition. Meanwhile, Caleb is upset that Merlyn has stopped communicating with him, and decides to throw a “going away” party for her. Ben feels guilty after shooting Mr. Biggs, a Trinity homeowner who went crazy with his shotgun one afternoon. Buck compels the radio man to kill his wife and longtime partner so he can jump to TV without any hangers-on.

**14. “Inhumanitas”** Written by Stephen Gaghan and Michael R. Perry; Directed by Bruce Seth Green; airdate: January 17, 1996; *Guest Cast:* Pat Hingle (Pastor); Tim Grimm (Brian Hudson); Ruth Reid (Barbara Hudson); Wayne DeHart (Bertie); Yvonne Graetzer (Female Realtor); Brandlyn Whitaker (Sue Ellen Hudson); Peter Townes (Frenchman).

Lucas Buck has been blackmailing Trinity’s pastor to reveal the secrets of the townspeople he has heard during confession. Buck uses that ill-gotten information to scam an enemy, a lawyer who sued the sheriff’s department and walked away with \$600,000, out of his property and home. Meanwhile, Merlyn returns to the mortal coil to engage Buck in final combat. After he repents his allegiance to Buck, the town pastor teams with Merlyn in the church to bring the war to Trinity’s sheriff.

**15. “The Plague Sower”** Written by Robert Palm; Directed by Mel Damski; airdate: January 24,

1996; *Guest Cast*: Michael Harding, Robin Mullins, Patt Noday, Margo Moorer, Amy Dawn Anderson, Haley Salyer, Gene Dann, John Henry Scott, Kay Joyner.

People are dying in Trinity from a bizarre disease: an illness which leaves the corpses bleeding from their eyes and ears. A doctor named Peel from the CDC comes to town to investigate, and immediately suspects that Sheriff Buck may be involved in an effort to further this plague. Meanwhile, Gail and Buck overcome their differences and begin to become romantically involved. Meanwhile, Dr. Crower thinks he is having a nervous breakdown after several disturbing visions and a visit from Merlyn Temple.

**16. “Doctor Death Takes a Holiday”** Written by Victor Bumbalo; Directed by Doug Lefler; airdate: January 31, 1996; *Guest Cast*: Veronica Cartwright (Mrs. Smith); Tamara Burnham (Charlotte); Will Leskin (Judge Streeter); Tina Lifford (Miss Holt); Nancy Saunders, Amy Parrish, Tyrone Hicks, Henry Laurence, Bill Roberson.

A sick woman who claims to be Sheriff Buck’s mother attempts to kill the evil Buck. Upon listening to the woman’s stories, Dr. Crower becomes involved in the turmoil and soon attempts to murder Lucas Buck himself. Meanwhile, Lucas Buck uses the weaknesses of a local judge’s family to have Dr. Crower committed to an insane asylum.

**17. “Learning to Crawl”** Written by Robert Palm and David Kemper; Directed by Michael Lange; airdate July 4, 1996; *Guest Cast*: Ted Raimi, Alex Van, Stuart Greer, Regan Forman, Amy Dawn Anderson.

A father-son weekend fishing trip turns evil when Sheriff Buck attempts to cultivate young Caleb’s dark powers. When a crisis occurs in the woods involving three murderous criminals and a remote cabin, Buck and Caleb find that their respective “powers” are necessary to stay alive and bring “justice.”

**18. “Echo of Your Last Goodbye”** Written by John Cork; Directed by Oz Scott; unaired; *Guest Cast*: Tanya Rollins, Chris Fennell (Boone); Alex Van (Deputy Floyd); Robin Mullins (Nurse Stacie); Tammy Arnold.

In another attempt to stop Sheriff Buck, Merlyn makes herself visible to Ben. This is all an attempt on her part to implicate (again) Lucas in her own death months earlier. Meanwhile, Gail learns of Caleb’s heritage even as Caleb faces a challenge at school.

**19. “Triangle”** Written by Jeff King and Robert Palm; Directed by James Frawley; airdate: July 10, 1996; *Guest Cast*: Robin Mullins (Nurse Stacie); Deacon Dawson (Pilot); Amy Dawn Anderson (Nurse #1); Russell Deats (Little Luke); James Frawley (Bartender).

Gail discovers she is pregnant with Sheriff Buck’s baby after their physical affair, and he prevents her from leaving town with Caleb. Meanwhile, Buck attempts to win back Selena and get rid of her new lover, Dr. Peel. Haunted by visions of a demonic child, Gail contemplates an abortion. While Dr. Peel plots to steal away from Trinity (for Uganda) with Selena, Gail’s sanity snaps and she becomes suicidal.

**20. “Strangler”** Written by Michael R. Perry, Stephen Gaghan, Robert Palm; Story by Michael R.

Perry and Stephen Gaghan; Directed by Doug Lefler; unaired; *Guest Cast:* Gareth Williams (Albert DeSalvo, The Boston Strangler); Alex Van (Deputy Floyd); Amy Parrish (Nurse Sara); Sean Bridgers (Policeman #1); Rachel Lewis (Nurse #2).

After clashing again with Merlyn at the graveside of Gage Temple, Lucas Buck summons the spirit of Albert DeSalvo, the Boston Strangler, to destroy her soul. DeSalvo arrives in Trinity, but he has a wandering eye and difficulty keeping on task. With Buck gone away at a convention, it is up to Ben to stop DeSalvo after he returns to his old habits, strangles a nurse, and assaults Gail. DeSalvo befriends Caleb to lure Merlyn into the open ... but Caleb proves he is not defenseless.

**21. “The Buck Stops Here”** Written by Steve De Jarnatt; Directed by Lou Antonio; airdate: July 10, 1996; *Guest Cast:* Jim Antonio, Brent Jennings, Lynda Clark (Rita); Alex Van (Deputy Floyd); Lee Freeman (Doris Lydon); Dean Whitworth (Cecil Spurgeon); John Shearin (Waylon Flood); Wayne DeHart (Old Bertie).

Selena and Dr. Peel make love in Lucas Buck’s bed, but the sheriff returns home just as they leave ... and is all too aware of the transgression. Meanwhile, another doctor at the hospital is desperate to cure his wife, and is convinced that Lucas Buck has stolen her medical records so as to punish him. Meanwhile, Gail’s pregnancy continues, with her unborn child developing at an alarming rate ... and she is nursing an appetite for raw, bloody meat. When Dr. Peel confronts Buck at his house, he finds Lucas Buck dead, murdered, and is soon fingered and arrested as the killer.

**22. “Requiem”** Written by Shaun Cassidy; Directed by Lou Antonio; airdate: July 11, 1996; *Guest Cast:* Jim Antonio, Lynda Clark (Rita); Alex Van (Deputy Floyd); Lindley Mayer (Ashley Narone); Don Henderson (Grave Digger); Len Hathaway (Elderly Man); Diana Taylor (Businesswoman); Mary McMillan (Wealthy Woman).

Caleb has become pure evil—and Merlyn tries one more time to save him from the darkness bubbling inside. Selena positions herself to become Caleb’s guardian, realizing he is heir to the Buck family power. Buried alive, Lucas Buck is rescued by Dr. Peel and Ben even as Caleb lays a trap for Gail, who is pregnant with a competing Buck heir. Buck races home to stop Caleb from killing his unborn child, but the final battle in Trinity ends in the sacrifice of another life.



## *Kindred: The Embraced* (1996)

### CRITICAL RECEPTION

“*Kindred*, which might have been wretched and campy—think *Melrose Vampires* or *Vampires 90210*—turns out to be a wry morality play with Julian as a dashing antihero. At its best, *Kindred: The Embraced* shares the appeal of *The X-Files* and other trendy tales of the paranoid and supernatural.”—Caryn James, *The New York Times*: “Turf Wars in Which Hunks Vie for Blood,” April 2, 1996, page C16.

“resembles cross between oldie soap *Dark Shadows* and syndicated *Nick Knight* in its balance of action and romance.... Acting and dialogue are frequently stilted; this may be intentional, as characterization of the other worldly. Overall look ... is fine.”—Todd Everett, *Variety*, April 8–14, 1996, page 38.

### FORMAT

Based on a book/game entitled *Vampire: The Masquerade*, the 1996 TV series *Kindred: The Embraced* is a genre soap opera which is part *The Godfather* (1972), part Shakespeare (particularly *Romeo and Juliet*), and part vampire melodrama (*Salem’s Lot* [1978] meets *Dracula* meets *Dark Shadows*). If that description intimates that *Kindred: The Embraced* is purely derivative, then it has done the program a disservice, for this hourlong series is ambitious, well-acted, complex, and fun. It is a bright light in the Terror TV pantheon despite its brief run of just eight episodes.

The premise of *Kindred: The Embraced* is simple: vampires live and walk among us in the picturesque city of San Francisco. The details of *Kindred*, however, are anything *but* simple, and the creators have gone to great lengths to create a highly-detailed, even complex back-story and lexicon which nicely speaks of a “real” counterculture at work underneath the face of modern America. Like warring mobsters, the vampires of *Kindred* are separated by blood. Not into families, like the Corleones, but into blood clans. Among these are the Ventrue (the businessmen, the administrators), the Gangrel (the warrior caste), the Toriador (the artists, the musicians), the Nosferatu (the only inhuman-looking clan, of mystery) and the youngest clan, the warring Brujah. Each of these five clans has an elected *primogen*, a leader, who sits in at the ruling *conclave*, a legislative and executive council or tribunal overseen by the prince of the city. All the vampires are called *Kindred*, and the word “vampire” is derided as a human invention. All of the Kindred in San Francisco live by a strict law known as *The Masquerade*. The Masquerade prevents Kindred from killing human beings or even revealing their existence to the mortal world. Protecting the Masquerade is an important Kindred law, so important that those who disobey it are sentenced to termination called *final death*.

Still, in some circumstances, Kindred will *embrace* humans to increase their own number. To embrace a human, a Kindred will bite one on the neck, and then replace human blood with his/her own “special” blood. That human then “turns” and his/her “new” Kindred blood reflects the clan that has done the embracing. Embracing a human against his/her will is another Kindred crime, one roughly analogous to rape.

Out of this complex and highly-structured world, *Kindred: The Embraced* recounts the epic saga of Julian Luna (Mark Frankel), the Kindred prince of San Francisco. Like *Forever Knight*, it is a story of redemption as this vampire attempts to preserve the Masquerade, protect humans from exploitation, and prevent an all-out clan war. But, like Michael Corleone, Julian is often undone by plotters and schemers, and even his own character foibles. Luna is a Ventrue married to Lillie (Stacy Haiduk), the primogen of the Toriador. They share a kind of “open” love arrangement which permits Luna to stray, but which vexes Lillie because she really loves her prince. Julian is supported in his governing of the city by Daedalus (Jeff Kober), an enforcer primogen of the Nosferatu clan, his headstrong young bodyguard Chase (Channon Roe) of the Gangrels, and Archon Raine (Patrick Bauchau). Raine, like Robert Duvall in *The Godfather*, might be considered a kind of consigliere.

Stories in *Kindred: The Embraced* are often intertwined and complicated. Julian attempts to hold the clans together in peace, but the Brujah, under the evil Eddie Foiri, are just itching for war. A human cop, Frank Kohanke (C. Thomas Howell), discovers the Kindred society and first tries to bring down Luna and later becomes a reluctant ally to his cause when he understands what is at stake. The hot-headed Gangrel Chase falls in love with Sasha (Brigid Walsh), Julian’s last living human relative. This couple must carry on their affair in secret because she is Julian’s blood, and later she becomes a Brujah—a vampire Juliet to Chase’s Gangrel Romeo. Lillie and Julian also spar because Julian has turned away from her and fallen in love with a beautiful human reporter named Caitlin Byrne (Kelly Rutherford), who knows nothing of the Kindred or the Masquerade.

Through the course of this impressive but brief series, much is learned about Kindred society (there is a subsect of shapeshifting assassins called *Acemites*), Kindred history (they were hunted by the Spanish Inquisition), Daedalus (a sensitive, Mr. Spock-like pacifist vampire), and even Archon Raine (who hides a deadly secret from his colorful past). Most of the action is centered in Julian’s palatial home (where the conclave meets regularly), at Lillie’s chic nightclub, the Haven, or Frank’s favorite greasy spoon (the appropriately named “Night Hawks”). Unlike most TV vampires, Kindred can see their reflections in mirrors, go out in sunlight (if they’ve fed recently), and can even weather a proximity to garlic bulbs (as seen hanging inside Caitlin Byrne’s Dutch Colonial kitchen.)

The title sequence of *Kindred: The Embraced* commences with three black and white illustrations of Nosferatu-like vampires (the first of whom actually resembles Klaus Kinski in the 1979 feature film *Nosferatu*). Then, there is a lovely shot of the Golden Gate Bridge at night. A glowing, full moon races across the screen in fast-motion, from left to right, and the main title comes up in white.

## HISTORY

It seems that vampires never go out of fashion, they just get reinvented. It’s probably safe to assert that there have been as many variations on vampire lore as there have been horror TV series. Since 1970 alone, the TV universe has given us the “evil” traditional vampire (à la Christopher Lee or Bela Lugosi) in *The Night Stalker*, the tragic and misunderstood vampire (*Dark Shadows*, *Angel*), vampire “heroes” (*Forever Knight*) and even campy vampires (*Cliffhangers*, *Dracula: The Series*). With 1996 and the introduction of *Kindred: The Embraced*, yet another variation is born: the noble bloodsucking mobster. The inspiration for this new wrinkle in a seemingly immortal legend comes not from horror literature or filmic antecedents in the genre, but from the highest-grossing motion picture of 1972: *The Godfather*, starring Al Pacino, Marlon Brando, and Diane Keaton, and directed by Francis Ford Coppola (*Dracula* [1992]). In this classic film, based on the novel by the late Mario Puzo, handsome and swarthy Michael Corleone (Pacino) ascends to the leadership of the mafia. As he does so, his

enemies in the other mob families plot to destroy him, the law seeks to expose him, and he attempts to find a way out of the world of crime because, in the end, it costs him everything including love, freedom, salvation, and (in *Godfather III* [1990]) even the life of his only daughter.

*Kindred: The Embraced* follows the equally swarthy mobster and vampire prince Julian Luna (Mark Frankel) as he too seeks to remain in power, experience love (with a beautiful human reporter), and preserve the rule of law among his warring, sometimes brutal, kind. Instead of clashing Italian families, he holds court over distinctive vampire clans. Although *The Godfather* is the primary source material which *Kindred: The Embraced* seeks to develop, it also has elements of *Romeo and Juliet* (a romance between members of warring clans) and *Dark Shadows* (it is a soap opera but not a gothic one.) With all these antecedents as backdrop, *Kindred* is one of terror TV's genuine epics. It is a lush-appearing production which aspires to be not just horror, drama, or entertainment, but moving tragedy. Created by John Leekley (*Nightmare Cafe*), and co-produced by Aaron Spelling and Mark Rein-Hagen, the author of *Vampire: The Masquerade*, a best selling role-playing game, this series has more going for it than many of recent vintage. It is perfectly cast, with the lovely Stacy Haiduk (*Superboy* [1988-92], *SeaQuest DSV* [1993-96], *Brimstone* [1998]), the villainous Brian Thompson (*Werewolf, Something Is Out There, The X-Files*), the hot-blooded Channon Roe (*Boogie Nights* [1997]), and movie star C. Thomas Howell (*The Hitcher* [1985]) lending dynamite and colorful support to lead Mark Frankel. As for Frankel, he made the difficult role of Luna his own and in the process created modern TV horror's sexiest, most charismatic, and most memorable bloodsucker. Producers on the show also took special care to make each individual episode feel like a chapter in a grand opera rather than just an hourlong video venture.

Sadly, the high quality of *Kindred: The Embraced* could not outweigh the fact that the ratings were terrible. The Fox Network, which has shown considerable good faith by sticking with *The X-Files* and even the low-rated *Millennium* for three years, and bad faith by canceling *Space: Above and Beyond*, *Strange Luck*, and *The Visitor*, opted to go the latter route with this dynamite series. It pulled *Kindred: The Embraced* from its line-up after a seven week trial run in the spring of 1996. One episode ("Nightstalker") was left unaired in the states when the series was canceled.

Real-life tragedy overcame TV tragedy in September of 1996 when rising star Mark Frankel was killed in an automobile accident scarce months after the last episode of *Kindred: The Embraced* aired. Co-producer Aaron Spelling (who had once hoped to do a revival of *The Twilight Zone* with Rod Serling) returned to the horror genre in 1998 with the far less complex (and far less artistically satisfying) show called *Charmed*. Ironically, *Charmed* is considered a hit primarily because it airs on the WB Network, a network on the way up which is satisfied with lower ratings and smaller audiences. It is a shame *Kindred* never aired there because if it had, it might be considered successful too. Still, resonances of *The Kindred* can be found on the WB today. Stacy Haiduk guest-starred on *Charmed* ("Feats of Clay") as an Egyptian spirit, and both Channon Roe and Jeff Kober (Daedalus) have appeared on the third season of the excellent *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* ("The Zeppo" and "Helpless" respectively).

All eight episodes of *Kindred: The Embraced* have been released on a three VHS tape set from Republic Home Video. Because of the high quality of most episodes in this short-lived series, this set is one collectible worth tracking down.

## CRITICAL COMMENTARY

If vampires are your thing, you enjoy soap operas, and the gangster genre is a favorite, a horror fan could do no better than to tune into *Kindred: The Embraced*, a sexy horror TV series which is graced with a plethora of attractive performers, lush production values, and a high erotic content. Taken on its own terms, this is a delightful “soap” which ranks high in the horror pantheon because it introduces a classic TV antihero, the vampire and tragic character, Julian Luna. Luna is an evolved vampire, one generation beyond Barnabas of *Dark Shadows* because, unlike the vampire Collins, this man is satisfied with what he is. With Barnabas there was always the sense that he wanted to be human, to get out of the vampire gig and find love and happiness in old-fashioned, mortal terms. Not so with Julian, a man who is proud of his heritage and people, and utilizes his powers not out of instinct or revenge, but because it is a natural part of him. He is *über mensch* genetically, even if his predisposition is to like humans and what they represent.

What an epic figure this (undead) character is! Luna is a Shakespearean leader of men who is trying to hold his kingdom together at all costs. He is a passionate lover. He is a man prone to violence. He uses women and brute force alike, and yet remains intrinsically heroic despite his dark side and exploitive behavior. Despite foibles such as lust, Luna’s heart is in the right place ... just don’t stick a stake in it. As performed by the late Mark Frankel, Luna is a memorable TV creation. A glowering, brooding Hamlet of the bloodsucker set, this hero agonizes, longs, fights, and debates in operatic fashion. When *Kindred: The Embraced* focuses on Luna and these very literary values, the short-lived series is almost hypnotic in its power. It works as Shakespeare chic. In Hollywood, inspiration is frequently defined as how well old elements are recombined in new ways, and by giving viewers a Godfather/Shakespearean vampire prince with more than a little melancholy in his character, *Kindred: The Embraced* shines as both horror and drama. The strength of *Kindred: The Embraced*, as in all soap operas, is not in any particular episode, but in the overall arc, the sweep of the story, and the manner in which characters manipulate, maneuver, and manhandle one another.

*The Embraced* is a sexy show because, in essence, it is about urges and desires, and the need to control and release them. The Kindred themselves are masters of rigid control. One of their primary and most sacred rules (as characterized in “Nightstalker”) is to “drink only what you need, nothing more.” Inherent in that directive is the notion that there are some Kindred who *cannot* control what they are, or the breadth of their appetites. That is where the eroticism comes in: the surrender of reason to lust and hunger. The fear of losing control, of devouring and being devoured, informs the very premise of this TV series. The show is also quite clearly about the grasping and aspiring for the forbidden, another tenet of erotic drama. Humans are “forbidden” ground for the Kindred, yet Julian and Caitlyn become lovers. Even among the clans, certain attachments are forbidden. Sasha (a Brujah) and Cash (a Gangrel) are not allowed to mingle ... yet they do mingle. In these and other examples, *Kindred: The Embraced* is about breaking societal taboos for the purpose of lust, and emotional satisfaction. As such, it is quite a passionate series. It is a welcome change from the current face of horror, which because of *The X-Files* is very much steeped in rationalism and science (i.e., *Strange World*, *The Burning Zone*, and others). *Kindred: The Embraced* is a reminder that horror can be an emotional, sentimental genre as well as one filled with rationality, science, and explanation.

Of course, vampires have always been erotic creations, since before Bram Stoker’s novel, even. “Sucking” blood, life’s precious fluid, has been characterized as erotic, euphoric, even orgasmic in many films over the past one hundred years, and that tenet survives in spades in *Kindred*. In “Prince of the City,” Julian Luna flies to Caitlyn Burns’ bedroom window by night. Her curtains flap and rustle, the breeze blows, and there is an awareness on the part of the viewer that the Dracula archetype is still

a powerful one. A charming, erotic man seduces a desirable young woman, his lust and otherworldliness serving as both an aphrodisiac and contrast to her innocence and beauty. The times have changed, and the vampire no longer wears a cape, but the situation remains the same, as eternal as the vampire myth.

*Kindred: The Embraced* is a compelling series not just because it is very sexy, but because it features an epic sprawl. This is not just the story of Julian Luna. It is the chronicle of his city, and his law as the Brujah clan tries to seize control and is eventually defeated in a gang war. Part of the series' hypnotic power comes from the fact that it begins *in medias res*, with a living background behind the stories. It is announced early on that Archon is a former leader of the city, representing the past, and Luna's previous attachments (including the lovely Alexandra) also bring history to light. Beyond that, the series provides tantalizing glimpses of the past: references and allusions to the Kindred through history: during the Spanish Inquisition, and before. Vampire legend is addressed, and so on. All of these factors lend a verisimilitude to the series, a sense that viewers are peeking in on a world already in progress. *Kindred* is artful because it starts not "at the beginning," but in the present, and then weaves generations of history, legend, and personal lives into the here and now. Beyond this approach, *Kindred* is compelling in the way all good soap operas manage to be. It is filled with intrigues and mysteries. Who is having sex with whom? Who *wants* to have sex with whom? Who will betray Julian, and why? Watching people (and vampires) act on emotional, lustful impulses makes the series unpredictable and fun to watch.

This book is about terror TV, and the above review may not make it clear exactly in what manner *Kindred: The Embraced* fits that bill. Though it is about vampires and their loves and lusts, the show also trades in frightening ideas and stories. At the core of *Kindred* is the concept that man is being hunted by a superior species (also the central notion of *Prey* [1998]), and that he is unaware of it. The show also deals in frightening implications. Luna is a fair and just prince, but if the balance of power in San Francisco should suddenly shift and the Masquerade be terminated, what would become of humankind? Traditional horror stories are also introduced in various stories. Babies are kidnapped and sacrificed for a blood ritual in "Bad Moon Rising" and there is the rape of innocence in "Live Hard, Die Young and Leave a Good Looking Corpse."

Although *Kindred: The Embraced* is sexy, compelling, and filled with horror, it is not without its flaws. The show as a whole is better than many of its individual stories, if that is possible. Additionally, logic and continuity are not always applied from program to program. For instance, Luna continually asserts that Kindred do not break their own rules. But in "Nightstalker," "Romeo and Juliet," and "Live Hard, Die Young and Leave a Good Looking Corpse," the Kindred *do* break the rules. Kindred serial killers, Kindred doctors who drink the blood of children, and a renegade Kindred rock 'n' roller who embraces humans against their will are all featured in the short-lived series. After awhile, it would seem impossible for Luna to make any claim that Kindred are law-abiding people. More troubling, perhaps, is the fact that C. Thomas Howell seems miscast as Frank, the tough-as-nails cop. The quality of *Kindred: The Embraced* episodes rises significantly when Howell and his hackneyed character are little involved in the proceedings.

Still, *Kindred: The Embraced*'s obsession with breaking taboos, with bearing witness to appetites satiated, and its emotional battlegrounds make it a unique modern series in an era when we demand so much rationality and explanation. This series is the ultimate extension of the horror soap opera developed by *Dark Shadows*, *Twin Peaks*, and *American Gothic*. The Shakespearean and *Godfather*

overtones and strong performance by Mark Frankel make this series a memorable addition to the horror Valhalla, and one of the all-time best as well.

## CAST AND CREDITS

*Cast:* C. Thomas Howell (Detective Frank Kohanek); Kelly Rutherford (Caitlin Byrne); Stacy Haiduk (Lillie Langtree); Mark Frankel (Julian Luna); Erik King (Sonny); Channon Roe (Cash); Brigid Walsh (Sasha); Patrick Bauchau (Archon Raine); Jeff Kober (Daedalus).

*Credits: Music:* J. Peter Robinson, John Tartaglia. *Theme Music:* J. Peter Robinson. *Editor (various episodes):* Ron Binkowski, Russell Livingstone, Ray Lovejoy, Susanne Stinson Malles. *Production Designer:* Trevor Williams. *Director of Photography (various episodes):* Ernest Holzman, John R. Leonetti. *Co-Producer:* Mark Rein-Hagen, Steve De Jarnatt, P.K. Simonds. *Producers:* Llewellyn Wells, Joel Blasberg. *Executive Producers:* John Leekley, Aaron Spelling, E. Duke Vincent. *From the Book Vampire: The Masquerade by Mark Rein-Hagen. Associate Producer:* Cheryl R. Stein. *Original Casting:* Rick Millikan. *Casting:* Denise Chamian. *Production Manager:* Llewellyn Wells. *First Assistant Director:* James M. Freitag. *Second Assistant Director:* Jeff Srednick. *Prosthetic Makeup Effects Designed and Created by:* Todd Masters. *Key Prosthetic Makeup:* Thom Floute. *Costume Designer:* Peter Mitchell. *Costume Supervisor:* Donna Barrish. *Key Makeup Artist:* Donna Henderson. *Key Hair Stylist:* Charlotte Harvey. *Set Decorator:* Donald Elmlad. *Property Master:* Tommy Miller. *Sound Mixers:* John Sutton, Charlie Kelly. *Chief Lighting Technician:* Raphael Sanchez. *Camera Operator:* Alan Easton. *Key Grip:* Lloyd Barcroff. *Construction Coordinator:* Richard McDowell. *Script Supervisor:* Joanie Blum. *Location Manager:* Rich Rosenberg. *Stunt Coordinator:* Joe Dunne. *Special Effects:* Mike Meinardos. *Assistant Editor:* Lynn Warr. *Supervising Sound Editor:* Chris Harvengt. *Visual Effects Supervisor:* Ziad Seirafi. *Music Editor:* Rocky Moriana. *Music Coordinator:* Celest Ray. *Production Coordinator:* Nancy Rosing. *Assistant to Mr. Leekley:* Cynthia Eakin-Ayers. *Production Accountant:* Martha Cronin. *Transportation Coordinator:* Dave Bassett. *Executive Associate:* Renate Kamer. *Post Production Sound and Sound Effects:* Todd A-O Studios. *Visual Effects Compositing:* Digital Magic Co. *Digital Artist:* Ralph Maiers. *Color:* Pacific Film. *Filmed Partially on Location at:* Golden Gate National Recreation Area, San Francisco Maritime Historical Park. *Executive in Charge of Production:* Gail M. Patterson. *Executive in Charge of Post-Production:* Kenneth Miller. John Leekley Productions in association with Spelling Television.

## EPISODE GUIDE

**1. “The Embraced” (aka “The Original Saga”, aka “Pilot”)** Written by John Leekley; Directed by Peter Medak; airdate: April 2, 1996; *Guest Cast:* Kate Vernon (Alexandra Sarris); Brian Thompson (Eddie Fiori); Basil Hoffman, Richard Danielson, Tara Subkoff (Cash’s Girl); Cristina Ehrlich (Elegant Young Lady); Gil Combs (Second Assassin); Luis Defreitas (Trainer).

San Francisco cop Frank Kohanek investigates mob boss Julian Luna, a dark and mysterious tycoon who is the prince of all rival Kindred clans. Unbeknownst to Frank, Luna and his people are vampires who hide among the humans, on the verge of a clan war. Alexandra, Frank’s beautiful lover, is among the Kindred. She is rebuffed by Luna when she asks him to let her live in peace with Frank. Meanwhile, Luna’s last human grandchild passes away and he attends the funeral, meeting the rebellious young Sasha in the process. Luna’s wife, Lillie, and another clan leader, Eddie Fiori, conspire to force Luna to declare a blood hunt for Alexandra, who is Luna’s ex-wife and first love. Before being murdered by a representative of the Nosferatu clan, Alexandra breaks the “masquerade”

and reveals what she really is to Frank. Frank, whose first wife also died, vows to destroy Luna at any cost.

*Note:* This is the 2-hour premiere episode.

**2. “Prince of the City”** Written by John Leekley; Directed by Peter Medak; airdate: April 3, 1996; *Guest Cast:* Brian Thompson (Eddie Fiori); Yuji Okumoto (Lieutenant Kwan); Scott MacDonald, Kimberly Campbell, Christian Svensson (Nino Donelli); Michael Bauer (I.A. Investigator); Kim Delgado (I.A. Investigator); Richard Danielson (Billy).

Unaware that his partner Sonny is Kindred, Frank remains obsessed with bringing down Luna, whom he deems responsible for Alexandra’s demise. A sting operation designed to topple dock workers’ union boss and clan leader Eddie Fiori goes wrong when Frank’s informant is discovered to be wearing a wire. Meanwhile, Luna bails the hot-headed Sasha out of prison and introduces her to his new bodyguard, a Gangrel clan member named Chase. At the same time, a beautiful human reporter, Caitlin Byrne, seeks an exclusive interview from Luna after realizing that he is something of a mystery man.

**3. “Romeo and Juliet”** Written by Joel Blasberg; Directed by Ralph Hemecker; airdate: April 10, 1996; *Guest Cast:* Brian Thompson (Eddie Fiori); Emile Hirsch (Able); Judy Kain (Nurse); Peter Rocca (Nino); Gavin Decker (Martin); Kimberly Hooper (Lorraina); Peter Nelson (Doctor); Brian Lally (Detective O’Fallon).

Cash and Sasha have fallen in love and are meeting together in secret, even as a clan war between the Gangrel and Eddie Fiori’s Brujah edges ever closer. Meanwhile, a Kindred physician has been feeding on the blood of human youngsters in a children’s hospital, so Daedalus delivers “final death” to him on orders from Julian. Luna, realizing Sasha’s situation, allows Cash to embrace her, but the Brujah commit a brutal act and embrace the young human against her will. An infuriated Luna challenges Eddie for his act of defiance, but Eddie just sees this tirade as another excuse for all-out war.

**4. “Live Hard, Die Young and Leave a Good Looking Corpse”** Written by Aaron Mendelsohn, Paul Tamasy; Directed by James L. Conway; airdate: April 17, 1996; *Guest Cast:* Brian Thompson (Eddie Fiori); Ivan Sergei (Zane); Chandra West (Grace); Christopher Allport (Grace’s Father); J.C. Brandy (Riannon); Brook Susan Parker (E.R. Doctor); Stephen Quadros (Brujah); Carol Kiernan (Nurse); Leo Lee (Tong Overlord); Peter Rocca (Brujah #2); Lisa Butler (Floor Manager); David A.R. White (Clerk); Henry Kingi, Jr. (Security).

A young homeless man embraced by Lillie and the Toriador clan has become an overnight rock-and-roll celebrity with an eye for the ladies ... including the recently embraced Sasha. Worse, Zane has been disobeying the law of Luna and embracing his groupies without permission. One of the women he has turned into a vampire is Grace, who is taken to the hospital after a freak accident. She awakens after being pronounced dead and realizes she has been “changed,” a fact which causes Luna to order Zane’s execution.

**5. “The Rise and Fall of Eddie Fiori”** Written by Scott Smith Miller; Directed by Kenneth Fink; airdate: April 24, 1996; *Guest Cast:* Brian Thompson (Eddie Fiori); Ed O’Ross (Cyrus); Jack Conley (Benning); Kimberly Campbell, Blair Valk (Marissa); Kimberly Hooper (Lorraina); Richard Danielson (Billy).

A jealous Lillie hires a private investigator to take pictures of Julian and Caitlin Byrne together while Eddie Fiori, still smarting from his recent defeat, sends a shape-shifting Acemite assassin to kill Julian. Meanwhile, Sasha struggles with her blood's genetic hatred for all things Gangrel even while she continues to love Chase. Lillie's detective stumbles into danger when he photographs the Acemite's assassination attempt and then tries to blackmail Luna and Lillie with the incriminating photos. Julian is enraged by Lillie's betrayal, and Lillie seeks solace with Eddie ... who wants her to set up Luna for one more assassination attempt.

**6. "Bad Moon Rising"** Written by Jean Gennis, Phyllis Murphy; From a story by John Leekley, Jean Gennis, Phyllis Murphy; Directed by James L. Conway; airdate: May 1, 1996; *Guest Cast:* Yuji Okumoto (Lieutenant Kwan); Patricia Charbonneau (Ruth); Maureen Flannigan (Camilla); Skipp Sudduth (Goth); Kimberly Campbell, Una Damon (Mai Sung).

A renegade Nosferatu lurking in the park steals an infant from its mother. The vampire is Goth, who has reverted to his savage form with another Kindred named Camilla. Chase and Sasha reconcile as Chase is recruited to hunt down Goth. Luna, who once banished Goth and Camilla from his city, sets out to kill the two savage Kindred, but ends up learning a secret about Caitlin Byrne.

**7. "Cabin in the Woods"** Written by P.K. Simonds; Directed by Ralph Hemecker; airdate: May 8, 1996; *Guest Cast:* Titus Welliver (Cameron); Tony Amendola; Gordon Clapps (Clyde).

Julian and Caitlin take a road trip to Sonoma County, where his human family once dwelled. A young Brujah, Cameron, plots to become prince and he sets a trap for Luna and Caitlin in winery country. As it turns out, the young man's bloodlust is justified, for Archon once ordered Luna to conduct a Brujah massacre in that territory. Late at night, Julian is stabbed by Brujah assassins, and Caitlin discovers exactly who and what he is.

### UNAIRED EPISODE

**8. "Nightstalker"** Written by P.K. Simonds, John Leekley, Directed by John Harrison; *Guest Cast:* Brian Thompson (Eddie Fiori); Kimberly Kates (Elaine Robb); Scott Mosenson, Kimberly Campbell, Nicky Katt (Starkweather); Aixa Clemente (Medical Examiner); Philip Earl Johnson (Eric); Thomas Pridsco (Dri Mestres); James Ingersoll (Police Sergeant); Lisa Butler (Floor Manager); Jim McDonald (Military Man); Benny Quinn (Young Cop); Troy Spurlin (Jordan).

At Julian's nightclub, the Haven, a recently embraced patron, Starkweather, starts to tear the place up until taken away by the police. Meanwhile, the Nosferatu clan member Daedalus lusts for a beautiful and lonely Haven songstress whom he senses is facing "pain." Sasha continues to lust for Chase, even as Chase explains the rules of the Masquerade to the schizophrenic and disturbed Starkweather. The crazed man, unfortunately, has no intention of obeying the rules of the Kindred and he emerges a vampire serial killer until Julian Luna and Frank Kohanek join forces to stop his reign of terror.

*Note:* According to the three-box video release of *Kindred: The Embraced* by Republic Pictures, "Nightstalker" fits into series continuity as episode #3, right after "Prince of the City." "Nightstalker" was not aired in the United States.



## *Poltergeist: The Legacy* (1996–1999)

### CRITICAL RECEPTION

“cheesy, lurid fun.”—*People*, April 22, 1996, page 16.

“Behind the shamelessly misleading title there’s only a schlocky Showtime series ... about a secret society that dourly fights the forces of Hell. Some surprising good F/X serve as window dressing for clichés from other, better movies.... Once you’ve seen Shaver deliver a little devil, then get dragged around the room by her umbilical cord, you’ll have seen it all.”—Michael Sauter, *Entertainment Weekly*, August 15, 1997, page 87.

### FORMAT

Since the dawn of man, a secret organization has existed to combat the forces of evil, the dark side. This mysterious, clandestine brotherhood (which has counted Vlad the Impaler, Theseus, and Sigmund Freud among its members) is known as “the Legacy,” and it has “houses” all over the world, from London and Moscow to Capetown, Paris, Boston, and Philadelphia. In the closing years of the twentieth century, these Legacy Houses are populated by dedicated heroes with special skills who have armed themselves with the very newest technology and weaponry available.

*Poltergeist: The Legacy* is the chronicle of the San Francisco House, a magnificent castle on Angel Island which is run by the imposing and lugubrious Precept, Derek Rayne (Derek de Lint). Rayne is a natural leader of men, a low-grade “touch” psychic, and son of a former Legacy leader (Winston Rayne) who, in death, may have crossed over to the dark side. In his role as San Francisco House Precept, Rayne leads a crack team of investigators, soldiers, psychics, and psychologists against the agents of Satan. Serving under Rayne is handsome Nick Boyle (Martin Cummins), an ex-Navy SEAL whose harsh father was also a Legacy Man, Alexandra Moreau (Robbi Chong), a lovely African-American psychic who has inherited her powers from her voodoo grandmother, an angst-ridden Catholic priest named Callaghan (Patrick Fitzgerald), and the lovely psychiatrist Rachel Corrigan (Helen Shaver). Rachel’s daughter, Kat, is the youngest member of the Legacy Team, and an adolescent with fast-developing psychic powers as well.

At the close of the first season, Father Callaghan leaves the Legacy to be replaced by the stern Precept of the London House, William Sloan (Daniel J. Travanti). By the commencement of the third season, Sloan had become trapped in a nether world and was replaced by a visiting Legacy member from Boston, Kristin Adams (Kristin Lehman). Kristin is a tough cookie, not much of a team player at first, who is involved with the Legacy to determine the fate of her father, an archaeologist who virtually disappeared from the face of the Earth.

To prevent its many dramatic battles with evil from being fodder for newspapers, the Legacy operates under the name “The Luna Foundation,” and dabbles in everything from police forensic work to antiquities and unearthed artifacts. Often working separately as well as together, the San Francisco Legacy unit has faced Banshees (“Stolen Hearts”), a villainous Soul Chaser (“Brother’s Keeper”), werewolves (“Rough Beast”), the three Furies (“Hell Hath No Fury”), a serial killer with the ability to

migrate from soul to soul (“Song of the Raven”), ghosts (“Still Waters”), ghost towns (“The Internment”), evil shamans (“The Spirit Thief”), youth cults (“The Enlightened One”), a succubus (“Black Widow,” “She’s Got the Devil in Her Heart”) and villainous demons who inhabited five sacred sepulchers (“Pilot”).

For three seasons of roughly twenty episodes a piece, all of the supernatural action of *Poltergeist: The Legacy* unfolded on Showtime, a premium cable competitor for HBO, and then subsequently in syndication. For the fourth season, *Poltergeist* became part of “Sci Fi Prime” on the Sci-Fi Channel, joining *Farscape*, *Sliders*, and *First Wave* in first-run episodes. A fairly humorless series, *Poltergeist: The Legacy* is nonetheless a special effects show-stopper which has told some unique stories and showcased a terrific cast. Stars Helen Shaver and Martin Cummins have each directed several stand-out episodes.

## HISTORY

Directed by Tobe Hooper (*The Texas Chainsaw Massacre* [1974], *Lifeforce* [1985], *Invaders from Mars* [1986]), and produced by Steven Spielberg, *Poltergeist* (1982) was among the biggest financial hits in one of the most brutal movie summers of the early 1980s. Battling against Spielberg’s *E.T.*, Nicholas Meyer’s *Star Trek II: The Wrath of Khan*, Ridley Scott’s *Blade Runner*, Clint Eastwood’s *Firefox*, and John Carpenter’s *The Thing*, this “family” horror picture impressively managed to carve out a blockbuster niche of the summer’s box office. Buoyed by good performances from JoBeth Williams and Craig T. Nelson, as well as dazzling optical effects, courtesy of Robert Edlund, *Poltergeist* has become a horror classic in many fan and critical circles. Lackluster sequels (*Poltergeist II: The Other Side* [1986], *Poltergeist III* [1988]) followed fast on the heels of the first film, and their low quality assured that the film series would not survive into the 1990s. Also, a so-called *Poltergeist* “curse” claimed the lives of many of the film series’ stars (including Heather O’Roarke, Dominique Dunne, Geraldine Fitzgerald, Will Sampson, and Julian Beck). Another *Poltergeist* controversy involved the direction of the first film: some claimed that Spielberg had actually directed the show, rather than the credited Hooper. For whatever the reason, *Poltergeist*, the film franchise, was dead by 1990.

As has often been the case (*Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, *Friday the 13th: The Series*, and *Freddy’s Nightmares*, to name but a few), *Poltergeist* was resurrected after a brief absence, but this time for the television viewing audience. The so-called “revival” of *Poltergeist* began with the American premium cable network called Showtime (SHO). It had acquired considerable financial success with its mid-1990s remake of the classic ’60s series, *The Outer Limits*, and was looking to repeat the formula. This new *Outer Limits* anthology had a sweet deal: on Showtime it could feature graphic sex, nudity, and violence, and then air again, months later in syndication, in edited form, sans the rough spots. Subscribers to the station thus received a first (and more provocative) glimpse of the drama, while regular TV watchers were later privy to the return of a classic, without the more tantalizing visual goodies. Eventually, this deal ended up with *The Outer Limits* being paired with *Star Trek: Deep Space Nine*, and *The X-Files* (in rerun) as part of a powerhouse sci-fi “block.” In Charlotte, North Carolina, for instance, *The Outer Limits*, *The X-Files*, *DS9* and various programs such as *Babylon 5*, *Viper* and *Stargate SG-1*, have been part of a highly-rated package on WJZY called “Sci Fi Saturday” which has managed to keep many kiddies at home, and tuned in, for almost five years.

The astonishing success of the new *Outer Limits* quickly proved to Showtime that genre television had a hungry, and quite large, fan base. For their second trick, Showtime returned to the producers of *The*

*Outer Limits* at Trilogy Entertainment and asked for a new series, but one that was horror-oriented instead of science fiction. The title *Poltergeist* immediately was dredged up because it was recognizable, and because the new series, as conceived by producer Richard Barton Lewis, concerned spooks, spirits, and ghosts. At one point, Lewis described the connection between his concept and the film franchise which had preceded his contribution to the *Poltergeist* mythos:

*Poltergeist* dealt with a family that moved into a home built over sacred ground ... Poltergeists went after the Achilles' heel of each of these people. In terms of tone, the series is going to be a homage to that film. Each character ... is going to have some cross to bear that they're constantly being confronted with.<sup>1</sup>

The characters which Barton speaks of were to be members of a secret and ancient society known as "The Legacy," which was dedicated to fighting the minions of the darkside. Demons, vampires, succubi, ghosts, life-sucking goblins, and other monsters represented those "minions." In this case, the format could accurately be described as *The A-Team* meets *Kolchak: The Night Stalker*, with a few variations. For instance, the Legacy was a well-funded, worldwide foundation comprised of many members, and incredible technology, rather than on-the-run bounty hunters. The team was also better integrated than the *A-Team*, with an African-American woman, a macho, ex-Navy SEAL, a female psychiatrist, a Catholic priest, a beautiful blond archaeologist, and a precocious child serving under their Renaissance man leader, Derek Rayne.

All early indications were that *Poltergeist: The Legacy* would be a terrific addition to the terror TV roster, especially because Barton had been promised a high degree of freedom about what he could (and would) include on the show. Like *The Outer Limits* before it, *Poltergeist* had scored an impressive two-season commitment from Showtime, which was enough time to build a following. More to the point, Barton had a large budget with which to play. Regarding this sweet deal from Showtime, Lewis made the following comments:

We have free rein creatively to do whatever we want, at whatever level of intensity in sexuality or violence. What's great is we don't have a network breathing down our necks telling us how to do our stories. We have an advantage by having 44 episodes to lay out character in advance of where we want to go and take some chances and be a little different.<sup>2</sup>

This is an interesting series of remarks because *Poltergeist: The Legacy* is, surprisingly, one of the most predictable and hackneyed horror TV series of the 1990s. Though a 44-episode commitment was wonderful, the stories that were eventually told by the show tended to be ones involving soul-sucking monsters or cursed artifacts (shades of *Friday the 13th: The Series*). The teleplays, though beautifully performed, never created the kind of personalities that had been seen on *The X-Files*, *American Gothic*, or even the short-lived *Kindred: The Embraced*. The much-talked about cable "freedom" was expressed mostly through scenes of simulated sex (with much nudity) and extreme gore, not through any appreciably different level of intensity. In other words, *Poltergeist: The Legacy* was more titillating visually, but less interesting thematically, than one might have expected considering all the freedom its creators were purported to benefit from.

Diminishing the artistic merits of the series even further, the decision was made to end each season with clip shows! The clips show, the most ridiculous of all television clichés, requires characters to reminisce (usually in chronological sequence) about the events of previous stories, which are then

rerun as “flashbacks.” On *Poltergeist*, the clips shows were especially dreadful, as a life and death situation was introduced, and then the characters would try to guess which “darkside” villain was behind it. Adding insult to injury, the second and third seasons of *Poltergeist: The Legacy* included not just one clip show, but two!

Despite some contrived writing and a whole series of terrible clips shows (“A Traitor Among Us,” “Trapped,” “The Choice,” “Armies of the Night,” “Darkside”), *Poltergeist: The Legacy* flew through its first three seasons on Showtime and syndication at warp speed, generating a large, vocal fan base in the process. There were some cast changes during that time, but most were to the show’s benefit. The second season ditched Father Callaghan, who did not seem to have his heart in the weekly battles against evil, and introduced a new character in his stead called Sloan. Amazingly, Sloan, a Precept of the London House, was played by the great Daniel J. Travanti of *Hill Street Blues*! Not surprisingly, Travanti’s considerable talents were wasted in his role on *Poltergeist*, and by season’s end his character was conveniently written out of the proceedings as having been trapped at the portal to hell. More successful was the introduction of Kristin Lehman as Kristin Adams in the third season, but this interesting (and sexy!) character would also fail to survive the series’ fourth season.

With a cult following supporting it, no one was more surprised than *Poltergeist* fans when the series was arbitrarily canceled at the conclusion of its third year! In this case, the Sci-Fi Channel came to the proverbial rescue and renewed the series for a fourth season. The new *Poltergeist: The Legacy* was to be the linchpin for a Sci-Fi Channel block of original programming called “Sci Fi Prime.” *Poltergeist* thus began airing new episodes in March of 1999, at 7:00 P.M. on Friday nights, immediately before *Farscape*, *Sliders*, and *First Wave*. The cast of *Poltergeist* was back in its entirety for the fourth season, and Simon MacCorkindale joined up as a recurring villain (and ex-Legacy member) named Reed Horton.

Joy quickly turned to anger and frustration when the Sci-Fi Channel stopped promoting the series almost at once. Although *Farscape*, *Sliders*, and *First Wave* received much, even excessive, publicity, *Poltergeist* was rarely advertised or mentioned in association with the other series. Soon the Sci-Fi Channel’s end strategy became clear: it had renewed the series for a fourth season only because it had already purchased the first three seasons of *Poltergeist* and required an additional year of episodes to make the daily “stripping” process a successful one. Thus, without much fanfare, *Poltergeist: The Legacy* was canceled on the Sci-Fi Channel just months after it was resurrected! As of this writing, its TV future appears to exist only in Sci-Fi Channel reruns. *Poltergeist* fans have a legitimate gripe, as an argument could easily be made that had the Sci-Fi Channel devoted just a few more advertising bucks to *Poltergeist*, the series would have lasted a good five or six seasons. This argument is buttressed by the fact that *Poltergeist* and *First Wave*, which is heavily publicized, generally earn about the same ratings points (0.8 million viewers).

Still, *Poltergeist* is not alone in this treatment: *Sliders* and *Mystery Science Theater 3000* are two other fan favorites which have been given a reprieve from the junk heap of cancellation only to be tossed out after brief airing of cheaply made “new” episodes on the Sci-Fi Channel. Before *Poltergeist: The Legacy* departed the airwaves, stars Helen Shaver, Derek De Lint, and Martin Cummins all directed episodes of the series, often contributing some of the program’s finest moments.

Like all the production values on *Poltergeist*, the guest roster on the show is an impressive one: Roy Thinnes, Rene Auberjonois, Jeff Kober, William Sadler, William B. Davis, Ben Cross, Rae Dawn

Chong, A.J. Langer, Anthony Michael Hall, Jessica Walter, Esther Rolle, David Birney, and even the WWF wrestling star called The Undertaker have stopped by to either team with or menace this psychic *A-Team*.

Despite the cancellation of the series, a series of *Poltergeist: The Legacy* original novels will soon be published.

## CRITICAL COMMENTARY

For the most part, *Poltergeist: The Legacy* is a very enjoyable horror TV show. It is, as this author's father used to describe *The A-Team*, a "diverting" hour. In another words, it is a series which captures one's attention, even if it is not particularly innovative or interesting on a thematic or artistic level. Had *Poltergeist: The Legacy* aired in the 1980s, this review might look very different, perhaps even a great deal more enthusiastic. However, this text is being written at the cusp of a new millennium, and *Poltergeist: The Legacy* is simply not in the same class of quality as '90s imaginings such as *Twin Peaks*, *The X-Files*, *Millennium*, *American Gothic*, *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, *Brimstone*, and *G vs E*. Those are programs which meld artistic and horrific ethos to inform and entertain a new, savvy generation of TV watchers. *Poltergeist* may have no such lofty goals, but the inevitable result of such contextual paucity is that the series flatlines. It exists merely as potboiler: all sound and fury, but woefully little significance. *Kolchak: The Night Stalker*, a product of the turbulent adolescence of the horror genre in the 1970s, demonstrated a great deal more innovation and individuality than this dull-witted series has, and so it is impossible for this reviewer to be overtly enthusiastic about *Poltergeist*. That established, this author and his wife have thoroughly enjoyed watching the series together, and have been pleasantly "diverted" by its plotlines for the last few years. In the plus column, *Poltergeist* does feature an excellent cast, with Helen Shaver (*The Color of Money* [1987], *Tremors II* [1995]), Martin Cummins (*Friday the 13th VIII: Jason Takes Manhattan* [1989]), and Kristin Lehman (*Forever Knight*, *Strange World*) proving the most consistently charismatic of the regular cast. And, frankly, some stories are just better than others.

What really sinks *Poltergeist: The Legacy* is its "TV" manner of thinking and plotting. The series appears to be written by people who have a familiarity not with theater, film, or literature, but only with old television shows. The inevitable result of such limited knowledge is a selection of stories and plots that have been seen time and time again, on everything from *Kolchak* to *Friday the 13th: The Series*. Basically, *Poltergeist* teleplays fall into just two distinct categories: "The Deal with the Devil" and "The Ghost Seeking Justice/Revenge." Nearly all Legacy adventures can be channeled into one column or the other. The Deal with the Devil tale is the story type which is highly reminiscent of *Friday the 13th: The Series*. In this class of adventure, a person is given a choice/wish/gift, but the cost of such is an association, and even ownership, by the dark side. The deal is often with the Devil himself, but sometimes also with demons and other assorted dark figures. Some of the more prominent "Deal with the Devil" stories on *Poltergeist: The Legacy* are: "Crystal Scarab," "Stolen Hearts," "Fallen Angel," "The Prodigy," "Wishful Thinking," "The Human Vessel," and "Brother's Keeper." This plot is really just a cookie cutter outline, in which any variation of people and deals can be handily fitted. This is the story: A \_\_\_\_\_ desperately wants \_\_\_\_\_ and will make any kind of deal with darkness to get it. Now, fill in the blanks: A *pianist* wants *fame* in "The Prodigy," Nick's *brother* wants *to live again* in "Brother's Keeper," a *man* wants *to save his sick daughter's life* in "Crystal Scarab," and so forth. From these narrowly varied desperations come the deal with the devil, and the involvement with the Legacy.

“The Ghost Seeking Justice/Revenge” is even more overused a trope in *Poltergeist: The Legacy*. “The Tenement,” “The Twelfth Cave,” “Ghost in the Road,” “The Substitute,” “Fox Spirit,” “Debt of Honor,” “The Light,” “Hell Hath No Fury,” “La Belle Dame Sans Merci,” “Out of Sight,” “Vendetta,” “Possession,” and “Still Waters” are just a few stories in which a supernatural entity (or sometimes a human) hopes to attain revenge for some kind of mistreatment, often on the part of Derek or some other Legacy member. A shaman wants revenge against Alex for imprisoning him in “Possession,” a spirit wants revenge for his death in “Out of Sight,” a ghostly woman wants her murder acknowledged in “Ghost in the Road,” and so forth.

Despite such basic, oft-repeated story outlines, *Poltergeist: The Legacy* does emerge as a stronger series than *Friday the 13th: The Series* because it has at least two models from which to repeat stories, rather than just one. Additionally, the fine cast of *Poltergeist* far and away outshines the performances on *Friday the 13th: The Series*.

Plot and character contrivances also run amuck in *Poltergeist: The Legacy*, as they do in no other modern horror drama. For instance, some team member is *always* missing from the action of the week. “Rachel’s at a convention,” “Nick will be back tomorrow,” “Derek’s in London till next week” ... these are the lame excuses heard on virtually every episode of the series to explain why certain characters are not involved. The real reason for the absence, of course, has more to do with production and cost than plot necessity. Half the cast was apparently off filming one episode, while the rest of the cast was filming another. Because a team-member is almost always missing in *Poltergeist: The Legacy*, the feeling of family, of a team, that is supposed to glue the fabric of the series together, is conspicuously absent. While watching several episodes of this series, one gets the distinct feeling that this cast could be a very potent, charismatic team if allowed to travel through several adventures together rather than piecemeal. “United we stand, divided we fall” is a proverb that epitomizes *Poltergeist*. The cast is always divided, and the series suffers for it.

An additional problem with this series is that the *Poltergeist: The Legacy* writers all seem to share a low opinion of viewer capabilities and intelligence. To wit: each story ends with a Legacy member “summing up” the adventure of the week in voice-over. Ostensibly part of the Legacy journals, this closing narration universally attempts to convey a lesson or thought of the week that is often trite, or even childish. It seems as if the writers do not trust their own stories, their own talents, and feel instead that they must push a moral down the audience’s collective throat. This “message of the week” closing narration is a strong contrast to the Captain’s Log on *Star Trek*, which is used to convey important information, as well as the Captain’s dilemma. Picard and Kirk never come right out and say “this week I learned so and so...” *Poltergeist* is not that obvious either, but it sure gets awfully close. “Maybe faith is all we have in the end,” Rachel gets to pontificate in one story (“Portents”), and so on. Do the writers not believe that viewers will understand the story unless it is encapsulated in Cliffs Notes form in the closing narration?

The same complaint can be made about the all-too redundant flashbacks featured so heavily on *Poltergeist*. Important plot-points are hammered at by the oppressive use of black and white flashbacks which are supposed to function as “psychic flashes.” Unfortunately, these flashbacks are usually acts or events which viewers are already privy to. Thus, again, the *Poltergeist* creative team is being obvious rather than artistic in its approach to drama. The series shows the viewer something once, and then it shows it again later, just in case someone went potty during the first showing. The flashbacks are not only unnecessary, they drag down the pace of the story. After watching *Poltergeist*:

*The Legacy* for any duration, one just wants to shout: “All right, we get it already. WE GET IT!”

*Poltergeist* stories are weak in any number of ways: from narrative structure to follow-up and closure. In “Hell Hath No Fury” for instance, the villain of the week is a policeman named Karmack who has been summoning up the Three Furies to conduct “justice” against those who have escaped the American legal system. At the end of the show, the cop himself is judged, and his heart is ripped out by the Furies. As he dies, two *Legacy* members are present. How on Earth is this crime explained to the police, who arrive on the scene to clean things up? One of their hallowed number is dead, his heart ripped out, and there are two suspects hanging around the scene who seem awfully uncommunicative. Like too much bad TV drama, “Hell Hath No Fury” concludes instantly when the “bad guy” is killed, not when all issues surrounding the story are resolved. There is no sense of logic or follow-up, just the feeling that the hour is up and things must be made tidy for the next episode. In the case of “Hell Hath No Fury,” fans may claim that Derek has pull with the authorities because of his association with the *Legacy*, but there have been other instances where the *Legacy* does run afoul of the police.

Bad TV drama is exactly what *Poltergeist: The Legacy* turns out to be on far too many occasions. The series features plot contrivances galore, especially in shows like “Stolen Hearts” and “Dream Lover,” wherein the mysterious artifact of the week *just happens* to be the very thing that can stop the evil monster of the week. It includes unnecessary sequels (“She’s Got the Devil in Her Heart” resurrects the succubus of “Black Widow” so the audience can see *more* flashbacks; “Possession” is a sequel to “Spirit Thief,” and “Irish Jug” is succeeded by “Wishful Thinking”). This laundry list of bad TV plotting reminds one of bad genre shows from two decades ago.

The two-part episode “Traitor”/“Doublecross” is a prime example. In this episode, the *Legacy* members throw their years of service and loyalty to Derek out the window when someone they have *never* met before claims that Derek committed murder twenty years ago. Suddenly, there is a full-scale mutiny against Derek, from the very people whose lives he has saved a dozen times (for *four* long years)! It is absolutely ridiculous! Yet, oddly, the story is totally enjoyable in a sense. It is like *The Bionic Woman* (1976-78) or *The Incredible Hulk* (1978-81) ... it is so dumb, so absent in internal logic, that it is actually fun at times. That may sound like an insult, but it is not meant to be. *Poltergeist* has a goofy, TV charm that is both its greatest strength and its greatest weakness. Nobody working on the show seems to remember what happened last week, and the characters never seem to learn from their past experiences (even though they keep having those damned flashbacks!). They are always totally shocked when the supernatural rears its ugly head to challenge them ... as if this kind of evil challenge weren’t the series’ bread and butter.

This author is not too snobby, nor too arrogant, to recognize a guilty pleasure when he sees one. *Poltergeist* may not have a lot on its mind, but it is not without a spirit of fun. Not surprisingly, the writing (often by people who worked on *Friday the 13th: The Series* and *Forever Knight*) is singularly undistinguished. The series may be witless, humorless, contrived, and styleless. However, its stars are sexy and fun to watch, and its special effects are good. And, truth be told, *Poltergeist*’s stories are fun in a dopey, innocent way, and the overall aura created by the series is undeniably a pleasant one. It ain’t art, and it is not even quality television ... but who cares when celebrity, cheese, and charm carry the day? Diverting. That is a good word for *Poltergeist: The Legacy*.

## CAST AND CREDITS

*Cast:* Derek de Lint (Dr. Derek Rayne); Helen Shaver (Rachel Corrigan); Martin Cummins (Nick

Boyle); Robbi Chong (Alexandria “Alex” Moreau); Alexandra Purvis (Catherine “Kat” Corrigan). **First Season:** Patrick Fitzgerald (Phillip Callaghan); **Second Season:** Daniel J. Travanti (William Sloan); **Third Season and Fourth Season:** Kristin Lehman (Kristin Adams).

*Credits: Executive Producers:* Richard Barton Lewis, Pen Densham, John Watson, Garner Simmons. *Co-Executive Producers:* Frank Abatemarco, Robert Petrovicz. *Producers:* Robert Petrovicz, N. John Smith, David Tynan. *Directors of Photography (various episodes):* Manfred Guthe, Andreas Poulsson. *Editors (various episodes):* George Appleby, Richard Benwick, Alison Grace, Eric Hill, Charles E. Robichaud, Michael Robison. *Executive Story Editor:* Michael Sadowski. *Associate Producers:* Fiona Duncanson, Kira Domaschlik.  *Casting:* Mary Jo Slater, Paul Weber. *Additional Casting:* Bette Chadwick. *Production Manager:* Jim Rowe. *First Assistant Director:* Rob Vouriot. *Theme:* John Van Tongeren. *Music:* Aaron Martin. *Production Designer:* Sheila Haley. *Art Director:* Liz Goldwyn. *Set Decorator:* Erik Gerlund. *Construction Coordinator:* Glenn Woody Woodruff. *Property Master:* Donald Buchanan. *Special Effects Coordinator:* Randy Shymkiw. *Stunt Coordinator:* Danny Virtue. *Camera Operator:* Jim Stacey. *Chief Lighting Technician:* Tom Watson. *Key Grip:* Gordon Tait. *Sound Mixer:* Lars E. Ekstrom. *Costume Designer:* Tom Burroughs Rutter. *Makeup:* Francesca Von Zimmermann. *Hairstylist:* Janet Sala. *Location Manager:* Lorne Davidson. *Transportation Coordinator:* David Anderson. *Script Supervisor:* Alexandra LaRoche. *Production Accountant:* Julie Rieder. *Production Coordinator:* Susie Wall. *Postproduction Supervisor:* Michael S. McLean. *Visual Effects:* Robert Hasbros. *Visual Effects Supervisor:* Brenda Hevert. *Postproduction Coordinator:* Lydia Hamilton. *Assistant Editor:* Trevor Mirosh. *Postproduction Assistant:* Nora O’Brien. *Assistant to Executive Producers:* Julie Fitzgerald. *Visual Effects Coordinator:* Robert Biagi. *Sound Designer:* Anke Bakker. *Sound Editor:* Sean Kelly. *Rerecording Mixer:* Paul Sharpe, Bill Mellow. *Rerecorded at:* Sharpe Sound Studios, Inc. *Laboratory, Postproduction and Animation:* Rainmaker Digital Pictures. *Computer Engineer:* David Cowan Enterprises, Inc. *Title Design:* Greenberg/Schluter, Inc. From Trilogy.

## EPISODE GUIDE

### • *First Season (1996)*

**1. “Pilot” (aka “The Fifth Sepulcher”) (2 hours)** Story by Richard B. Lewis; Teleplay by Brad Wright; Directed by Stuart Gillard; airdate: April 21, 1996; *Guest Cast:* Jordan Bayne (Julia); William Sadler (Shamus); W. Morgan Sheppard (Grave Digger); Daniel Piloh (Winston Rayne); Chad Krowchuk (Connor); Sandrine Holt (Ellen); Myles Ferguson (Young Derek); John Novak (Patrick); Dave Fredericks (Bartender); Jose Vargas (Peruvian Man); Marites Pineda (Peruvian Girl); Ingrid Torrance (Party Girl).

Almost thirty years after his father’s death at the hands of a demon in Chipote, Peru, wealthy archaeologist Derek Rayne continues to spearhead “The Legacy,” a secret society dedicated to the eradication of dark supernatural forces. At a party for the Legacy’s cover organization, the Luna Foundation, Derek experiences strange psychic visions which spur him to reexamine his late father’s dossier. In particular, he is in search of the fifth sacred box, a sepulcher, where the last of five fallen “watcher” angels remains imprisoned. Derek soon discovers that the last box is in Ireland, where young Catherine (“Kat”) Corrigan, daughter of Dr. Rachel Corrigan, is in danger. A shopkeeper opens the box and is infected with evil. The Legacy stops him, but not before he has impregnated Rachel with something horrible.



**2. “Sins of the Father”** Written by Garner Simmons; Directed by Allan Eastman; airdate: April 26, 1996; *Guest Cast:* Anthony Heald (Damon Ballard); Suki Kaiser (Lisa Ballard); Chris Gray (Michael Ballard); Joel Palmer (David).

An old friend of Derek’s, Damon Ballard, is accused of child abuse: a charge which seems hard to dispute considering that Damon was in a locked room with his boy, Michael, when the child was injured. Soon, a kind of stigmata on the boy causes a schism within the Legacy. Is the boy a victim of abuse, or is he being terrorized by demons? This case, though personal to Derek, has a special importance for Nick, who is struggling with a ghost from his own past.

**3. “Town Without Pity”** Written by Robert Masello; Directed by Ken Girotti; airdate: May 3, 1996; *Guest Cast:* Nick Mancuso (Reverend Hawkings); Jan Mortill.

Nick decides to investigate strange energy fluctuations in a Washington state forest where numerous vanishings have occurred over the years. Still struggling with the horrors she has witnessed of late, Rachel Corrigan joins Nick on this expedition and soon finds a religious community lost in time. When Rachel and Nick become trapped in this strange pocket universe, it is up to Derek and Alex help them find a way out. Rescue cannot come too soon, however, as the megalomaniacal Reverend Hawkings has eyes for Rachel.

**4. “The Tenement”** Written by Frederick Rappaport; Directed by Gerard Ciccoritti; airdate: May 10, 1996; *Guest Cast:* Fiona Hutchinson (Lady of Endless Night); David Cubitt (Kyle Vance); Lori Triolo, Benjamin Ratner, Gloria Chrichlow (Mrs. Wilkenson); John Taylor (Karl Vance); Scott Swanson (Judge Druckner); Alex Green (Adolphus Vance); David Longworth (Joseph Vance); Babe Dolan (Lena Vance).

Alex locks horns with a slumlord whose poverty-stricken property has proven unsuitable for habitation, but she soon encounters a spectral figure while moving out of one of the tenement’s residents. As punishment for his misdeed, the slumlord is ordered by a judge to spend the night in his own place, but Alex knows she must come to his rescue when the apparition, a woman, returns for more haunting. Alex soon learns that the tenement is a nexus for disaster and tragedy, having been the location of multiple murders over the years, beginning in the Roaring ’20s. Now she must be protected by the man she helped condemn, or the tenement’s legacy of terror will have a new chapter.

**5. “The Twelfth Cave”** Written by Robert Masello; Directed by Allan Eastman; airdate: May 17, 1996; *Guest Cast:* David Ogden Stiers (Randolph Hitchcock); Earl Pastko (Harper).

A sacred scroll, responsible for two deaths already, is brought to Derek and the Luna Foundation by Derek’s former comrade, Hitchcock. Unfortunately, the scroll—which seems to have a mind of its own—starts to have a bizarre and deleterious effect on Derek Rayne. As it turns out, the scroll is a very ancient confession to murder, and Hitchcock is torturing Derek with it so that a personal wrong from the past might be corrected.

**6. “Man in the Mist”** Written by James Cappe; Directed by Mario Azzopardi; airdate: May 24, 1996; *Guest Cast:* Julian Stone (Samuel Hartford).

While Philip contemplates leaving the Legacy, Rachel meets up with a new patient who seems to be haunted by spirits. Strangely, this “John Doe” has amnesia and seems to have arrived in the present

from a different time period all together. The mystery of his origins involves an accident at sea in 1874, and a ghost who has forgotten his past. More than that, this figure has returned from the grave because he has a promise to keep.

**7. “Ghost in the Road”** Written by James Cappe; Directed by Neill Fearnley; airdate: May 31, 1996; *Guest Cast:* Michelle Beaudoin (Wendy); Frank J. Grillo (Jerry Tate); Alex Diakun (Hank); Ken Kramer (Cyrus Barton); Alexa Gilmour (Janet); Nuno Antunes (Brian).

On a dark and lonely road, Nick picks up a woman whom he met once before, a woman who just wants to be “taken home.” This strange lady, Wendy, vanishes into thin air and Nick realizes he has been in the presence of a ghost. Again, a figure from the dead has returned for justice, and it is up to Nick to solve Wendy’s murder so her wandering spirit can finally rest.

**8. “Doppelganger”** Written by Bill Bleich; Directed by Allan Eastman; airdate: June 7, 1996; *Guest Cast:* Colleen Rennison (Cally).

Kat’s new imaginary friend starts trouble for the young girl at school. Meanwhile, a mummified corpse proves to be a point of interest for the Legacy. These strands merge as Kat’s friend is revealed to be the spirit of a young Egyptian princess who was murdered. If the Legacy is not careful, however, the spirit of the Mummy girl will end up inhabiting Kat’s body!

**9. “The Substitute”** Written by Jerry Patrick Brown; Story by Theodore Dreiser; Directed by Brad Turner; airdate: June 14, 1996; *Guest Cast:* Ben Cross (Sam Warden); Kaj-Erik Ericksen (Joe); Tony Sampson (George); Jorge Vargas (Arthur); Paul Batten (Monsignor); Jennifer Karmichael (Kim); Anna Hagan, Terry Kelly, Tobias Mehler.

A disenfranchised high school student finds a journal from the 1960s which allows him to conjure up an evil being called “The Warden.” This spectral avenger becomes a substitute at a Catholic school and almost immediately commences a brutal reign of terror. Philip, still questioning his allegiance to the Legacy, and Derek must now take on a lethal foe.

**10. “Do Not Go Gently”** Written by John Shirley; Directed by Michael Robison; airdate: June 21, 1996; *Guest Cast:* Molly Parker (Elizabeth); William DeVry (Kevin); Steve Jaittala (Blond Boy); William B. Davis (Dr. Nigel); Matthew Walker.

An asthmatic is rushed to a hospital after a bad attack in the park, but what awaits her at the institution is far worse than shortness of breath. As she soon discovers, Liz has entered a world of night terrors and terrifying dreams. Nick, who once had a relationship with Liz, and Rachel investigate the hospital together but come up with very different philosophies about their present case. Their study leads them to a doctor who may be guilty of murder ... and who may even be practicing witchcraft.

**11. “Crystal Scarab”** Written by Hart Hanson; Directed by Brad Turner; airdate: June 28, 1996; *Guest Cast:* Roy Thinnes (Clayton Wallace); Nikki de Boer (Samantha).

Another friend of Derek’s is facing a terrible dilemma: his daughter Sam is dying of a terminal illness and the only way to save her life may involve supernatural powers. Specifically, Wallace uses a powerful relic, a scarab, to help Samantha recover, but the deadly tool demands a life in return. When Wallace does not have enough energy within him to save his daughter’s life, he knows he must find

another life in his stead.

**12. “The Bell of Girardius”** Written by Robert Masello; Directed by Joseph L. Scanlon; airdate: July 12, 1996; *Guest Cast:* Lloyd Berry (Jenkins); Ryan Michael (Anton); Barbara Tyson (Miranda); Joy Coghill (Mrs. Blake); Jason Griffith.

A scholar in medieval arts working for the Luna Foundation may be keeping a deadly secret about her lost lover. It turns out that he died a few weeks ago and has been returned to life using an artifact called the Bell of Girardius, which can revive the dead. Now the Legacy must help the beautiful Miranda fight her dead lover, a musician who wants her to share his grave with him.

**13. “Fox Spirit”** Written by Bill Bleich; Directed by Allan Eastman; airdate: July 19, 1996; *Guest Cast:* Victor Wong, C. Ma, J. Douglas Stewart (Jensen); Erik Keenleyside (Miller); Benita Ha, Robert Lewis (Jake); Aaron Pearl, Ed Hong-Louis, Colin Foo, John E. Parker.

Two workers in subterranean Chinatown find themselves amidst an area of century-old artifacts. An act of sacrilege releases an ancient ghost from its trap, and the spirit begins to terrorize the city. The ghost was apparently spawned in the late 1800s when the Chinese were a persecuted minority, and now a female “fox spirit” wants revenge. Derek and the Legacy are brought in by a local Chinese sorcerer who realizes that something is rotten in Chinatown.

**14. “Thirteenth Generation”** Written by Garner Simmons; Directed by Brad Turner; airdate: July 26, 1996; *Guest Cast:* Laurie Holden (Cora Jennings); Art Hindle (Professor Jordan Slater); Laurence Bayne (Detective Longbow).

As Derek speaks as a guest lecturer at a university, he is confronted about a recent finding. Bones have been unearthed at a lake, and they could relate to the very case Derek is lecturing about. When Derek investigates, he finds that Hell’s Gate Pond is indeed haunted by the spirits of the witches who died there.

**15. “Dark Priest”** Written by Grant Rosenberg; Directed by Brad Turner; airdate: August 2, 1996; *Guest Cast:* Tom Schanley (Tom); J.C. Mackenzie (Stan).

Two brothers break into the Legacy House during a Luna Foundation gala, and take back what they believe is their property: a charmed medallion owned by their now-deceased father. As it turns out, the father of these brothers was a satanist, a fact which pits sibling against sibling. Now, ritual murders are being committed in the devil’s name and the medallion must be returned to the Legacy before a dead man can revenge himself upon Derek and his team.

**16. “Revelations”** Written by Frank Abatemarco; Directed by Allan Eastman; airdate: August 16, 1996; *Guest Cast:* Jennifer O’Neill (Loraine); Allison Hossack (Constance); Camille Mitchell (Monica); Katie Stewart (Patty); Lorraine Landry (Jan).

Rachel returns to her former boarding school to investigate reports of witchcraft and devilry. What Rachel finds in her old haunts is a dangerous, malevolent talking doll. Worse, a local witch coven is using innocent children for some dark purpose.

**17. “The Bones of Saint Anthony”** Written by Robert Masello; Directed by Helen Shaver; airdate:

August 23, 1996; *Guest Cast*: Alan Rachins (Victor); Frank Moore (Sloane); Linda Sorenson, Peter Hanlong (Dr. Cornell); Kim Restell (Dr. Frances Carlin).

A strange experiment at a local college laboratory has apparently spawned an ancient evil. When bells ring all over town to herald this strange rebirth, the Legacy investigates. In this case, an effort to clone St. Anthony has gone wrong, and a demon has been reborn in his stead.

**18. “Inheritance”** Written by Bill Bleich; Directed by Brad Turner; airdate: August 30, 1996; *Guest Cast*: Tony Burton, Don S. Davis (Taggart); Garry Chalk (Sheriff).

Rachel unexpectedly inherits her Aunt Rebecca’s southern plantation, but finds that things in the New South aren’t quite what she expected. Derek senses danger for Kat at the strange estate, and Rachel starts to experience bizarre nightmares and visions. In fact, Rachel is soon undergoing a strange change: playing the piano and finding herself possessed by a spirit who wants a second chance at life.

**19. “The Signalman”** Written by George Geiger; Directed by Brenton Spencer; airdate: September 3, 1996; *Guest Cast*: Kevin Kilner (David); Kim Kondrashoff (The Signalman); Peter Bryant (Sgt. Mapes).

Alex experiences a psychic vision of an old friend named Praeger in which he is in jeopardy in a military setting. Setting out to help, Alex learns that Praeger is involved with a military installation which is supposedly capable of (safely) disposing of chemical weapons. Praeger and Alex soon realize that a spirit, a signalman from the outpost’s past, may be attempting to warn them about a deadly accident which could result if the military installation becomes active.

**20. “The Reckoning”** Directed by Garner Simmons; Directed by Michael Robison; airdate: September 13, 1996; *Guest Cast*: Zelda Rubinstein (Christina); Andrew Johnston (Joshua).

A strange little spirit called Christina materializes before Derek and warns that a terrible evil is approaching with the intent to steal a child’s soul. Christina is an oracle, a seer who has helped Derek’s father in the past, so Derek trusts her prophecy now. Before long, little Kat Corrigan is in danger, and Rachel is wondering again why all this terror is heaped upon her little girl. The approaching terror, however, comes from Rachel’s own family history.

**21. “Traitor Among Us”** Written by Bill Froelich; Directed by Brenton Spencer; airdate: September 20, 1996; *Guest Cast*: Phillip Granger (Sir Tremayne); Susan Hogan (Claire Spenser); Lawrence Dane (Charles Bannion).

Derek is charged with treason, and must stand trial before a Legacy tribunal. Not certain who his accuser is, Derek’s only hope for exoneration rests with the journals of his own team. But those very journals might be the final nail in his coffin.

*Note*: This episode features clips from “Pilot,” “The Tenement,” “Twelfth Cave,” “Sins of the Father,” “Do Not Go Gently,” and “The Inheritance.”

• *Second Season (1997)*

**22. “The New Guard”** Written by Michael Sadowski; Directed by Michael Keush; airdate: March 3, 1997; *Guest Cast*: Daniel J. Travanti (Sloan); Mimi Kuzyk (Dr. Alcott); Eric Keenleyside (Mr.

Brown).

When Derek is injured, the Precept of London House, a prickly “by the book” fellow named Sloan, arrives to assume control of the San Francisco Legacy House. Though Nick chafes under the new leadership, and Sloan is openly critical of Derek’s methods, the team works together to discover how and why Derek came to be wounded.

**23. “Black Widow”** Written by James Cappe; Directed by Allan Eastman; airdate: March 9, 1997; *Guest Cast:* Diane DiLascio (Karen Morgan); Jordan Bayne (Julia); Shane Kelly (Deputy); Timothy Webber (Sheriff).

One of Rachel’s patients is discovered dead, and she and Nick investigate the crime. It looks as if her deceased client had sexual intercourse shortly before he died, which Rachel suggests is incongruous behavior considering her patient’s character. When more deaths start to occur, it becomes clear that a beautiful, life-sucking succubus is on the loose and seducing hapless men to their deaths. Nick eventually finds himself in bed with the monstrous woman, who can take on any form, even one quite irresistible to him.

**24. “Lights Out”** Written by Bill Bleich; Directed by Rafael Zelinsky; airdate: March 14, 1997; *Guest Cast:* Hagan Beggs.

A strange box arrives at the Legacy House. After much consideration, study, and debate, the team elects to open the box. Inadvertently, they release strange life forms, of apparently Scottish origin, from a supposedly eternal slumber. Now the question must be asked: How to get rid of these spirits?

**25. “The Spirit Thief”** Written by Bill Bleich; Directed by Allan Eastman; airdate: March 21, 1997; *Guest Cast:* Robert Wisdom (Daniel); Rae Dawn Chong (Tanya Moreau); Lillian Davison (Naomi Sabah); Marcie Mellish (Anna Jeonette); Thelma Gibson (Grandma Rose); Neil Denis (Sick Boy).

Alex’s estranged sister, Tanya, arrives in San Francisco with her new lover Daniel, an imposing man with incredible mystical healing powers. A shaman, Daniel gives Alex a special bottle which holds souls captive so he can utilize their power to sustain human life. Sensing Alex’s psychic strength, Daniel attempts to recruit her in his healing efforts. When Tanya falls ill after a particularly harrowing healing ritual, Daniel has just the leverage he needs to bring Alex into his ranks.

**26. “The Gift”** Written by Gary Sherman; Directed by Michael Robison; airdate: March 28, 1997; *Guest Cast:* Chad Krowchuck (Conor Corrigan); John Novak (Patrick Corrigan).

It is Christmas time in San Francisco, and Derek throws a party. It is not the season to be jolly, however, when Kat starts to experience visions of dead family members. Kat’s relationship with her father comes to the forefront as the young girl, and Rachel as well, must confront a tragic past and an evil brother who was once vanquished.

**27. “Transference”** Written by James Cappe; Directed by Brad Turner; airdate: April 4, 1997; *Guest Cast:* Kim Coates, Tom Butler (Det. Frank Karmack).

Rachel is stalked by a dangerous ex-patient who has developed a deadly fixation for her. Saved from the death sentence by reason of insanity, this crazed psycho looms ever closer as his obsession with

Rachel grows.

**28. “Dark Angel”** Written by Robert Masello; Directed by Michael Kelisch; airdate April 11, 1997; *Guest Cast:* David Fox (Dr. Praetorius); Meredith Salenger (Emma).

On a dark road at night, Nick is stopped by a girl who claims that someone has been trying to kill her. Nick brings the girl, Emma, back to the Legacy House, where the team attempts to help her. When Rachel examines their new house guest, she offers a startling prognosis: Emma may be imagining her pursuit! When it is learned that Emma escaped from an asylum, the Legacy must weigh their feelings for Emma against their feelings for her unusual physician, Dr. Praetorius.

**29. “Lives in the Balance”** Written by Garner Simmons; Directed by Graeme Lynch; airdate: April 18, 1997; *Guest Cast:* Jonathan Scarfe (Lucas); Camille Mitchell (Sister Ingrid Rayne); Wally Dalton (Justin).

At a time of melancholy and remembrance, brought on by the unexpected death of someone important to him, Derek is confronted with a surprise. Is the young man who keeps appearing to him actually the son he never knew he sired? Derek takes the young adult, Lucas, on a wilderness trip to learn the truth. Unfortunately, Lucas wants to steal Derek’s body and destroy the Legacy from within.

**30. “Rough Beast”** Written by David Tynan; Directed by Garner Simmons; airdate: April 25, 1997; *Guest Cast:* Chilton Crane (Tracy); Laura Harris (Anne); Kim Restall (Dr. Frances Carlin).

Rachel’s latest patient is experiencing terrible nightmares about a werewolf who attacked her when she was just a child. To help, Rachel consults Freud’s writings (Freud was a Legacy member!). When murders are soon committed by what appears to be a vicious animal, Rachel must face the possibility that San Francisco is the hunting ground for a werewolf.

**31. “Ransom”** Written by Chris Black; Directed by Allan Eastman; airdate: May 2, 1997; *Guest Cast:* Lori Hallier (Angeline); Martha Henry, Camille Mitchell (Sister Ingrid Rayne); Stefan Arnglim (Patient); Adrienne Carter (Child).

Derek’s sister, a nun, is held hostage by sinister forces, even as Derek’s psychic sight informs him of the terrible event. Though Sloan reminds Derek of Legacy policy regarding negotiations with terrorists, Derek sets out to save his sister’s life. At the heart of the evil kidnapping is another Legacy Precept who was lured to the dark side while investigating its power.

**32. “Finding Richter”** Written by Garner Simmons; Directed by Michael Robison; airdate: May 9, 1997; *Guest Cast:* Grahame Greene (Charlie); Brent Stait (Richter).

Nick’s commanding officer from his Navy SEAL days is alive and apparently up to no good. He is responsible for the recent assassination of a prominent cardinal in the Catholic Church, and now Nick must find him. After a protracted search, Richter, who considers Nick a “prodigal son,” and Boyle confront one another. Richter attempts to recruit Nick in his mission to spread God’s word by destroying his clergy, but Nick understands that Richter has made a pact with the darkside.

**33. “Repentance”** Written by Mike Berman; Directed by Paul Lynch; airdate: May 23, 1997; *Guest Cast:* Patrick Fitzgerald (Father Callaghan); Tom Butler (Det. Frank Karmack); Miguel Fernandez

(Eric Ravenwood).

Eric Ravenwood is a terrible murderer who is afraid of death and God's judgment. He wants to repent his sins and receive absolution from Father Callaghan, but the ex-Legacy priest refuses to cooperate. Ravenwood sets out to destroy Callaghan and kill all of his friends, forcing Callaghan to take desperate measures. Callaghan takes the spirit of the killer inside his body, and prepares to commit suicide, but the killer takes over and launches a campaign of evil against the Legacy.

**34. "The Devil's Lighthouse"** Written by Robert Masello; Directed by Graeme Lynch; airdate: May 30, 1997; *Guest Cast:* Ian Tracy (Michael); Joy Coghill (Elizabeth); Sebastian Spence (Noah Wilkes); Gillian Barber (Joan Warner).

A haunted lighthouse is a site of terror for Alex Moreau and the Legacy, as they investigate a boy's disappearance there. Strangely, the only witness, the boy's girlfriend, has been rendered blind by whatever horror she witnessed inside. While Nick talks with an old acquaintance from his Navy SEAL days, the investigation of the lighthouse continues and reveals a restless ghost.

**35. "Lullaby"** Written by John Martin; Directed by William Fruet; airdate: June 13, 1997; *Guest Cast:* Shannon Beaty, Cyndy Harmon, Anthony Harrison, Rebecca Toolan.

An innocent sleep-over party turns to terror for young Kat Corrigan when she plays with a Ouija board and is contacted by a strange spirit who repetitively sings a lullaby to someone named Selena. Rachel learns of the Ouija game and informs Derek of the situation, but their concern hits a brick wall against Kat's uncommunicative nature. To help Kat, the Legacy must dig deep into the past to learn why another spirit is restless, and this time the truth concerns a never-ending bond between mother and daughter.

**36. "Silent Partner"** Written by Bill Bleich; Directed by Brenton Spencer; airdate: June 20, 1997; *Guest Cast:* Kathryn Morris (Laura); Neil Vipond (Benjamin); Lawrence Dane (Ned); Tom Shorthouse (Harry).

A séance which Nick and Derek attend becomes frighteningly real when a deaf woman is possessed by a female spirit. The Legacy looks into the situation, and Nick forges a bond with the hearing-impaired woman, Laura. A bit of research soon reveals that the spirit is actually that of a woman who died in the 1940s, and who is a dead ringer for Laura.

**37. "Shadow Fall"** Written by Steve De Jarnatt; Directed by Allan Eastman; airdate: June 27, 1997; *Guest Cast:* Ryan Kent (David); Margo Kane (Fiona); Floyd Crow Westerman (Ezekial); Floyd Faircrest (Shadow Spirit); Forbes Angus (Mr. Rayburn).

A Native American youngster is accused of assault after being dragged into the principal's office for misbehavior. As Rachel befriends the boy, she learns that he is being watched by the spirit of a shaman, a constant protector since a ritual was conducted on the boy as an infant. The Legacy attempts to protect the boy, David, from juvenile jail, and what could be a very dangerous future.

**38. "Mind's Eye"** Written by James Cappe; Directed by Ken Girotti; airdate: July 4, 1997; *Guest Cast:* Maurice Godin (Jeffrey Star); Susan Hogan (Michelle); Jesse Moss (Peter); Ocean Hellman (Sandra Bruskin); Steve Griffith (Victor Bruskin).

Jeffrey Star is a sham, a small-time charlatan, con-artist psychic who bilks unsuspecting marks out of their hard-earned money. After being apprehended as a fraud, Star is injured and his psychic insight is activated, becoming “real,” as it were. Now Jeffrey Star teams with the unimpressed Legacy House to use his special powers in a productive way.

**39. “Fear”** Written by Mark Stern and Bill Bleich; Story by Mark Stern and Jay Roach; Directed by Allan Eastman; airdate: July 18, 1997; *Guest Cast:* Michael Sarrazin (Dr. Peyton); Rosemary Dunsmore (Emily); Sarah Strong (Suzie); Cheryl Wilson (Janet).

A strange spectral visitor is entering the cells of the West View Sanitarium and choking the life out of the unbalanced wards living there. Rachel is asked by a friend from the home, Emily, to look into the deaths. After some interviews, Rachel comes to believe that she is actually looking at supernatural murders, not self-inflicted deaths. The key to solving the puzzle may be that the sanitarium stands on what was once Hobb’s (Devil’s!) Road.

**40. “Someone to Watch Over Me”** Written by Robert Masello; Directed by Brenton Spencer; airdate: July 25, 1997; *Guest Cast:* Louise Vallance (Serina Croft); Robert Wisden (Professor Donnelly); Zoltan Buday (Sentry); Allan Lysell (Andrew Croft); Freda Perry (Monica).

In the middle of the night, Rayne receives a phone call from Spencer Croft, his college roommate. The only problem is that Croft died a day earlier: he drowned in a reflecting pool he had specially constructed to ancient specifications. As Derek grows closer to Serina, Spencer’s wife, the Legacy team learns that the pool is a Macedonian gateway to the world of the supernatural. It is a portal to the land of the dead, like one built by Alexander the Great in 4 B.C., but did Spencer build this “back door” out of death’s domain for himself, or for Serina, who has been miraculously cured of a fatal ailment?

**41. “Let Sleeping Demons Lie”** Written by Stephen J. Feke; Directed by Gary Sherman; airdate: August 3, 1997; *Guest Cast:* John Pyper-Ferguson, Stephen E. Miller (Captain Smith); Patty Lombard (Patricia Sloan).

Sloan is aboard a plane bound for the Legacy House, with some important historical/occult artifacts which could shed light on the Legacy’s past. Sloan’s plane mysteriously crashes, and the Legacy must mobilize to rescue him. The situation is grim because Sloan’s plane went down in the mountains and the temperature is dropping rapidly there. The injured precept has far graver problems to worry about than the weather, however.

**42. “Trapped”** Written by Michael Sadowski; Directed by Graeme Lynch; airdate: August 10, 1997; *Guest Cast:* None.

While Derek and Alex are alone on the island, a storm and something much, much worse, strikes the castle. Nick returns home with Sloan and tries to determine which old Legacy enemy has attacked the stronghold, and what it has done with Derek and Alex. Sloan grills Nick about the previous Legacy encounters with evil forces while a possessed Derek captures Alex and plans to unlock the evil inside the five sepulchers.

*Note:* This episode features extensive footage from: “The Five Sepulchers,” “The Reckoning,” “The Dark Priest,” “Dark Angel,” “The Spirit Thief,” and “Ransom.”



**43. “The Choice”** Written by David Tynan; Directed by Michael Robison; airdate: August 17, 1997; *Guest Cast:* None.

Kat has had a bad dream, and Rachel contemplates leaving the Legacy. She feels guilty for getting involved in the battle against evil ... and jeopardizing Kat’s life. Her choice: seek a normal life, or stay with the family on Angel Island.

*Note:* This episodes features extensive footage from “The Reckoning,” “Repentance,” “Ransom,” “The Inheritance” and “The Spirit Thief.”

• *Third Season (1998)*

**44. “Darkness Falls”** Written by Michael Sadowksi; Directed by Michael Robison; airdate: January 23, 1998; *Guest Cast:* Anthony Palermo (Phillipe D’Arcy); Sarah Strange (Justine).

While visiting New Orleans, Alex is bitten by a female vampire. Alex returns to the Legacy House and starts experiencing the symptoms associated with vampirism, including bloodlust, aversion to sunlight and the inability to cast a reflection. Alex’s vampire mistress, Justine, arrives on the island, as well as a would-be romantic partner and old friend of Alex’s named Phillipe D’Arcy. Now the Legacy must save Alex’s humanity before she makes her first kill ... but she has already set her sights ... and fangs ... on Nick.

**45. “Light of Day”** Written by Michael Sadowksi; Directed by Michael Robison; airdate: January 30, 1998; *Guest Cast:* Anthony Palermo (Phillipe D’Arcy); Sarah Strange (Justine); Chad Todhunter (Marcus); Kim Restall (Dr. Francis Carlin); Francis Flanagan (Nurse).

A nearly-undead Alex has bitten Nick in an attempt to become a full-fledged vampire, and Derek has learned that Phillipe is himself a creature of the night, one with great powers. When Phillipe kills Justine (another vampire!), and flees the Legacy House with Alex in tow, the other members of the Legacy must work to keep Nick alive. Soon, Derek and Phillipe face off, with the ultimate prize being Alex’s eternal soul. With the promise of immortality beckoning, will Alex choose darkness and damnation, or loyalty and friendship?

**46. “The Enlightened One”** Written by Grant Rosenberg; Directed by Graeme Lynch; airdate: February 6, 1998; *Guest Cast:* Dale Wilson (Jordan); Fab Filippo (Ethan); Les Martin (Father Reynolds); Kim Restall (Dr. Frances Carlin); Aaron Smolinski (David); Tara Spencer-Nairn (Cindy); Gregor Trpin (Robert); Todd Witham (Boy at Bus Depot).

Eight churches in three cities (Boston, Dallas, and San Francisco) have been burned to the ground via supernatural means. The Boston Legacy House sends the beautiful Kristin Adams to San Francisco to investigate the burnings with Nick and Alex (Derek is in London reporting to the Legacy council). A strange youth cult ruled by a mysterious figure called “The Enlightened One” is behind the church fires, and the branding and murder of a dead priest. As Kristin learns to work with Nick and Alex, she also reveals that her brother Ethan is part of the Enlightened One ... Lucifer’s ... flock.

**47. “Stolen Hearts”** Written by Garner Simmons; Directed by Michael Robison; airdate: February 16, 1998; *Guest Cast:* Paul Satterfield (David Cord); Allison Hossack (Demon).

On vacation, Rachel is romanced by David Cord, a handsome architect who saved her and Kat from a

wild dog. Although Rachel is unaware of it, David is a pawn of evil who has struck a deal with a banshee involving the ultimate disposition of Kat's soul. The evil spirit that wants Catherine has enlisted David to seduce Rachel so that in the throes of passion, Corrigan will forget her protection of Catherine, and the girl will consequently be turned away from the light. Meanwhile, Alex and Derek attempt to identify an artifact, a shield with a coat of arms, that has been buried under the sea for centuries.

**48. "Father to Son"** Written by John Benjamin Martin; Directed by Graeme Lynch; airdate: February 20, 1998; *Guest Cast:* Dominic Keating (Brian Krenshaw); Michael Moriarty (Major Robert Boyle).

On a lonely country road at night, Nick is run off the road by a blinding white light. Hearing shouts of pain and terror, Nick is drawn to a house where he witnesses the final moments of his long-dead father's life. His Dad's murder has never been solved, and it has baffled the Legacy for a decade, but Derek now believes that Nick saw some kind of psychic echo or flashback of Robert Boyle's death. This is especially difficult for Nick because he hated his father during life and now he must overcome his own feelings to find his old man's murderer ... an evil figure who sucks the youth and vitality from others.

**49. "Fallen Angel"** Written by Chris Black; Directed by William Fruet; airdate: February 27, 1998; *Guest Cast:* A.J. Langer (Alyssa Fulton); Ryan Francis (Travis Walker); Jay Brazeau (Father); Charles Andre (Car Owner); Jim Dunn (Policeman); Scott Heindl (Jimmy); Laurie Murdoch (Doctor).

A young man zaps a police officer with a bolt of red energy, and his girlfriend runs to a priest, terrified. The girl, Alyssa, is then brought to the Legacy, where she tells her story. The case becomes more complicated when the Legacy identification check reveals that both Alyssa and Travis are deceased: she is a fallen angel who has returned to Earth, and her boyfriend, Travis, is a demon raised from hell. When Travis attacks the Legacy House, Alyssa goes with him so as to protect her newfound friends, but Nick, Derek, and Alex have a plan to destroy the demon and help Alyssa earn her wings back.

**50. "Dream Lover"** Written by David Tynan; Directed by Jimmy Kaufman; airdate: March 6, 1998; *Guest Cast:* Crystal Chappelle (Jessica Lansy); Camyar Chai (Hassan); Martin Evans (Samuel Kellig).

A shape-shifting demon kills a friend of Derek's, Samuel Kellig, and then heads to Angel Island to recover a special urn. Derek receives the mysterious urn and attempts to decipher the cuneiform writings on it, which suggest some kind of strange rebirth or fertility rite. Meanwhile, Derek is haunted by highly erotic dreams of Jessica, Samuel's beautiful lover, who also happens to be a malevolent snake goddess alive since the time of the Minoans.

**51. "Debt of Honor"** Written by Jim Piddock; Directed by Gilbert Shilton; airdate: March 13, 1998; *Guest Cast:* Anthony Michael Hall (John Griffin); Jason Gray-Stanford (Myer); Phillip Mitchell (Joe Fratello); Peter Bryant (Frank Rollins).

A Desert Storm veteran and friend of Nick's is being terrorized by the ghost of a fallen comrade. Nick seeks help using the Legacy's resources, but he comes to realize that the friend's being haunted by the ghost of the dead soldier may have been involved in his death in the Middle East. Kristin determines that the soldier actually died in Mesopotamia near a Sumerian temple ... and the Sumerians believed that the wronged dead could come back to avenge the injustice which ended their lives.

**52. “The Light”** Written by Michael Ahnemann; Directed by Paul Lynch; airdate: March 20, 1998; *Guest Cast:* Jessica Walter (Suzanne Barnard); Margarita Cordova (Dolores Sanchez); Lochlyn Munro (Todd Barnard); Andrew Airlie (Edward Bishop); Barry Greene (Michael Barnard); Joanna Piros (Reporter); Peter Yunker (Robert Barnard).

An old Brouha witch calls upon a charmed golden medallion to deliver justice unto the enemies of her family, and a demonic light flies skyward, seeks out an enemy, and obliterates him in a burst of fire and light. Rachel is a close friend of the victim’s family, the Barnards—a wealthy, political family, and she asks the Legacy to look into the death. Another Barnard brother is executed in similar fashion by the light, the rain of fire, and Rachel feels the vengeance may stem from the grandmother of the Sanchez family, whose granddaughter died in an accident caused by the youngest Barnard, Todd. Alex learns the evil is being transmitted through a Toltec artifact capable of great magic ... but how can it be stopped?

**53. “Hell Hath No Fury”** Written by Bill Bleich; Directed by George Mendeluk; airdate: April 10, 1998; *Guest Cast:* Tom Butler (Detective Frank Karmack); Lisa Robin Kelly (Janine Kinsey); Malcolm Stewart (Jared Tanner); Roger Allford (Detective Gracen); Curtis Bechdholt (Punk Kid); Christopher Bolton (Darren Harding); Kim Restell (Dr. Frances Carlin); Bruno Verdoni (Detective); Maya Massar (Fury #1); Ian Bailey Mattia (Fury #2); Suzanne Zelmer (Fury #3).

A cop-killer escapes conviction but cannot escape a supernatural death: he is branded on the forehead with the scepter of Omega and his heart is removed by three cloaked Furies. The Legacy joins up with police detective Frank Karmack to investigate the supernatural death, and realizes they are dealing with a form of ancient Greek “justice.” Worse, they realize that the hot iron, the scepter, belongs to someone involved with Legacy work. When the cop killer’s lawyer is killed and his girlfriend is also targeted by the Furies, Derek starts to suspect that a friend to his organization, a law enforcement official, may be administering his own personal justice.

**54. “Irish Jug”** Written by Bill Dial; Directed by Martin Cummins; airdate: April 17, 1998; *Guest Cast:* Rene Auberjonois (Milo).

The private Keane antique collection is willed to the Luna Foundation for either exhibit or disposal. Among the relics is an Irish jug from the late-1700s which contains two Irish spirits, the souls of two trouble-making brothers and thieves. Now, Derek and his friend Milo drink the witches’ brew in the jug and their bodies are possessed by the imprisoned spirits. Kat discovers the truth about the two strangers inhabiting the bodies of her friends, and seeks the help of her Mother and Alex in putting things to right.

**55. “Metamorphosis”** Written by Mike Berman; Directed by William Fruet; airdate: April 24, 1998; *Guest Cast:* Chris Martin (Elliott Black); Eric Schneider (Therapist); Kim Restell (Dr. Frances Carlin).

Rachel is infected with evil by a patient named Elliott Black who has in his possession an artifact, a supernatural pick. When a mysterious brand mark appears on Rachel’s arm, she is overcome with paranoia, and the urge to kill Derek. Meanwhile, Kristin helps Alex hone her psychic sight, which she fears she has lost. While Rachel spirals into a paranoid, murderous fit, Alex has a devastating vision of Kristin’s missing father.

**56. “La Belle Dame Sans Merci”** Written by Garner Simmons; Directed by Brenton Spencer; airdate: May 29, 1998; *Guest Cast*: Esther Rolle (Grandma Rose); Robert Clothier, Gordon Currie, David McNally, Sean Day Michael (Rimbali); Kate Robbins (Claudine).

Alex dreams of a conflict from long ago: a post–Civil War duel between “gentlemen” in which she was to be the property of the victor. Old Grandma Rose insists Alex come home to Louisiana to work out this “dream walking,” and Nick accompanies her to the bayou to discover the past. Grandma Rose reveals how a beautiful slave, La Belle, lost her lover to her brutal, former owner, Aaron Wakefield, and how Alex is kin to Belle ... a reincarnation perhaps? Derek believes Alex is experiencing a psychic convergence: a portal through which the soul of the dead can be reborn into a body of the living.

**57. “The Prodigy”** Written by John Simmons; Directed by Gilbert Shilton; airdate: June 26, 1998; *Guest Cast*: Stephen McHattie (Lee Noir); Chad Willett (Eugene Kadar); Marie Stillin (Winifred Penrose); Victor A. Young (Milos Kadar).

Kristin comforts a concert pianist and ex-boyfriend after the mysterious death of his uncle during a performance. The uncle’s death sparks the interest of the Legacy because it appears supernatural. In truth, Eugene’s agent is manipulating some kind of force to buttress the pianist’s sagging talents. When Eugene falls for Kristin all over again and spurns his agent, the evil creature reciprocates with fatal results.

**58. “The Human Vessel”** Written by David Tynan; Directed by Paul Lynch; airdate: July 3, 1998; *Guest Cast*: Billie Worley (Tommy Crane); Kari Matchett (Carolyn Crane); Jenny-Lynn Hutcheson (The Girl); Ted Stuart (Child Tommy); Fred Keating (Dr. Ahrens).

An autistic young adult, a friend of Nick’s, is struck by lightning after retrieving a baseball from a haunted shed. Tommy comes to stay at the Legacy House with Nick and he befriends Alex while his sick sister, also struck by lightning, recovers in the hospital. Soon, Tommy is evidencing inexplicable new intelligence: learning to read and write, and coming out of his autistic fog. Unbeknownst to his friends, Tommy is also the pawn of a vengeful ghost who needs him to steal the life-force of others so her spirit can return to the mortal coil.

**59. “The Covenant”** Written by Michael Berman; Story by Richard Barton Lewis and Michael Berman; Directed by William Fruet; airdate: July 10, 1998; *Guest Cast*: Chad Lowe (Josh Miller); Kevin McNulty (Paul Miller); Camille Mitchell (Sister Ingrid); Sheila Moore, Lisa Maris, Gabrielle Miller.

A young nun, Mary, apparently falls to her death at a convent, and she returns to the grounds as an unquiet apparition, a ghost. Derek’s sister, Ingrid, is a nun at the convent, and Derek looks into Mary’s death while visiting. Meanwhile, Nick’s estranged brother passes away, and Nick goes to settle his estate and deal with his feelings of loss. To quiet Mary’s ghost, the Legacy team must determine if her death was murder, and what family secret her death protected.

**60. “The Internment”** Written by Michael Sadowski; Directed by Gilbert Shilton; airdate: July 17, 1998; *Guest Cast*: Cary-Hiroyuki Tagawa (Sam Tanaka); Kirsten Robek (Lydia); Gary Jones, Rheta Withan’H’ (Julia Berman); Betty Phillips (Older Lydia).

Rachel and Kristin search for a mythical town called Somerville which doesn't seem to exist on any map, and where Kristin's archaeologist father visited sometime before his disappearance. Once inside the town, Rachel and Kristin find themselves trapped in Somerville with an enigmatic Asian man, and some people in town seem to believe that it is (respectively) either 1950 or 1960. Soon, Kristin has disappeared and Rachel finds her in the town jail ... where she is also imprisoned by the Asian man. Nick and Derek go in search of their lost comrades and discover that in the 1940s the town of Somerville was also the location of the Salazar War Relocation Camp ... an internment camp for Japanese-American citizens.

**61. "Seduction"** Airdate: July 24, 1998.

Information unavailable.

**62. "Out of Sight"** Written by James Cappe; Directed by Michael Robison; airdate: July 31, 1998; *Guest Cast:* Maurice Godin (Jeffrey Star); Stephanie Dicker (Mary Johnson/Mary Brookshire); Sheila Larken (Mrs. Brookshire); Deryl Hayes (Security Guard); Jerry Schram (Daniel Walken).

Con man Jeffrey Star runs back to the Legacy when his newfound psychic sight gets him in trouble again. Fearing that "Hell wants a piece" of him, Star enlists Alex's aid and she is shocked when a vicious entity psychically attacks him and even calls him by name. Convinced there is real trouble, Derek and the remainder of the Legacy join the investigation, looking into Star's clients, and so forth. Star's newest mark is the beautiful Mary Johnson, but she has a secret: her father was destroyed by Star's advice and now his vengeful spirit is urging Mary to help kill him.

**63. "The Last Good Knight"** Written by David Tynan; Directed by Garner Simmons; airdate: August 7, 1998; *Guest Cast:* Tony Amendola (Justin Adams); Michael Richard Dobson, Brian Jensen, Christopher Logan (Peasant).

Kristin receives a package from Istanbul, ostensibly from her long missing father: a map from 1307 made of human flesh which leads the way to the Holy Grail. Kristin heads off overseas alone in search of the artifact and her father, while Nick and Derek pursue her to the Well of Souls. Kristin is zapped by the spirit of an evil King at the site, and then contacted by a mysterious stranger who claims he can lead her to the Grail. This stranger and Kristin find the Church of Rock, the last bastion of the Knights Templar, but a final battle between good and evil could rob Kristin of the father she has so long searched for.

**64. "Armies of the Night"** Written by Garner Simmons; Directed by Michael Robison; airdate: August 14, 1998; *Guest Cast:* Chad Todhunter (Marcus).

Derek makes a last stand with Nick as evil, but unknown, forces strike the Legacy House. All contact with external security has been lost, and Alex has not reported back after leaving the island to seek help. When Nick is spirited away after midnight by a fast-moving enemy force, Derek must look into his memory to determine which antagonist is waging war against the Legacy. When Alex unexpectedly returns to the House, the true nature of the enemy is revealed.

*Note:* This episode is another clips show, featuring footage from "The Prodigy," "Dream Lover," "Black Widow," "The Enlightened One," "Finding Richter," "Darkness Falls," "Light of Day," and others.

**65. “The Darkside”** Written by Grant Rosenberg; Directed by Michael Robison; airdate: August 21, 1998; *Guest Cast:* Fionnula Flanagan (Sorceress).

A strange woman lectures an unseen guest in her home about the war between the darkside and the light. She recounts stories about the Rayne family, fallen Legacy Precepts, and attempts to destroy the Legacy. It is soon revealed that the Sorceress’s guest is none other than Alex Moreau! She faces temptation from this evil source, who promises her immortality in return for her cooperation.

*Note:* “The Darkside” is also, alas, a clips show. This one features footage from “The Pilot” (again), “Lives in the Balance,” “Ransom,” “Stolen Hearts,” “Reckoning,” “Repentance,” and “The Spirit Thief.”

• *Fourth Season (1999)*

**66. “Song of the Raven”** Written by David Tynan; Directed by Garner Simmons; March 19, 1999; *Guest Cast:* Jeff Kober (Raymond Corvus/“The Harvester”); Michael Reilly Burke, Ben Cardinal, Tamara Gorski (Megan Torrence); Michael Kopsa (Father Norman); Clare Lapinskie (Jennifer Hollybrook); Derek Peakman (Mr. Kellogg); John Sampson (Officer); Charles Siegel (Sam Shadrack); Scott Swanson (Warden Taylor); Don Thompson (Horace Favor); Henry Watson (Doctor).

People in Mendocino are being murdered in the same manner as that practiced by an incarcerated serial killer on death row: their eyes have been removed. Derek arranges for Rachel to interview the imprisoned serial killer, Raymond Corvus, known also as “The Harvester,” so as to determine his mental state. If Rachel judges him sane, he will die by lethal injection, if insane—he will spend life in prison. While Rachel grapples with this dilemma, Corvus continues to use an eye-plucking raven from the netherworld to take the eyes of his victims, all enemies who helped to apprehend him.

**67. “Bird of Prey”** Written by David Tynan; Directed by Garner Simmons; airdate: March 26, 1999; *Guest Cast:* Michael Reilly Burke; Ben Cardinal; Tamara Gorski (Megan Torrence); Clare Lapinskie (Jennifer Hollybrook); Jeff Kober (Corvus); Michael Kopsa (Father Norman); John Sampson (Officer); Scott Swanson (Warden); Henry Watson (Doctor).

The soul of serial killer Raymond Corvus has migrated to the body of Jeffrey Sandor, a boyfriend of a dead victim. Derek fears that a beautiful reporter, Megan Torrence, may be the next to die because she interviewed Corvus just an hour before he was executed. A Native American specialist in an extinct tribe, the Chiopazzi, reveals to Derek and Nick that there exists in nature an elemental force called “The Hunters,” which prey on humanity and can migrate from body to body with the help of a deadly black raven. Corvus is apparently one of this ancient breed, and now he has set his sights on Rachel, who declared him sane enough to stand for execution.

**68. “Vendetta”** Written by Stephen McPherson; Directed by Jimmy Kaufman; airdate: April 4, 1999; *Guest Cast:* Eve Brenner (Gretchen Dunworth); Don MacKay (Doc); Philip Maurice Hayes (Sheriff); David Livingstone (Israel Clay); Lloyd Berry (Caretaker); Jeff Burnett (File Clerk); Lillian Carlson (Hotel Lady); Crystal Cass (Candace); Lee Taylor (Glen Morse); Royan Vukelic (Billy); John Destry, Annabel Kershanaw.

In Jubilee, Tennessee, a young man is killed by a vengeful spirit near an old lynching tree. Derek and Kristin head to town to investigate the murder. They soon discover that the evil spirit is an exact

duplicate of Kristin, and the ghost of a woman wrongly hanged in 1953 after she was believed to have started a fire which killed a family. Now Kristin and Derek must unearth the past to protect the future. A tangled web of lies is laid bare, and an obsessive love affair revealed, but Kristin soon finds herself trapped in a burning home when she gets too close to the truth.

**69. “The Painting”** Written by Michael Sadowski; Directed by Allan Kroeker; April 11, 1999; *Guest Cast:* Colleen Rennison, Venus Terzo, Geordie Johnson (Stephen Du Bekke); Christina Jastrzemeska (Maria).

A patient of Rachel’s has fallen in love with a romantic figure in a seemingly unfinished painting ... and she is absorbed into the rendering. Meanwhile, Kat befriends a teenage witch at her school, a witch with frightening powers. When Alex learns that Kat is experimenting with witchcraft, Kat casts a spell to make her keep quiet—or get deathly ill. Meanwhile, the figure in the ominous painting calls to Rachel, beckoning her to join him.

**70. “The Possession”** Written by John Simmons; Directed by William Fruet; airdate: April 18, 1999; *Guest Cast:* Robert Wisdom (Daniel Uare); Claudette Roche, Nathaniel DeVeaux, Yanna McIntosh, Virginia Capers (Grandma Rose); Robert Daprocida (Manuel); Lorraine Landry (Dr. Terrell); Candace O’Connor (Matron).

Grandma Rose visits Angel Island after experiencing a vision in which she sees Alex in mortal and spiritual danger from a supernatural force. Rose falls into an inexplicable coma after warning that she has been cursed by a black magic shaman of immense power. The Legacy hires a shaman of its own, Madame Claire, to help counter the curse and save Rose’s soul. When the curse proves too powerful for Claire to vanquish, Alex releases the evil shaman, Daniel, whom she imprisoned two years earlier, to save her grandmother’s life.

*Note:* This episode is a sequel to “The Spirit Thief.”

**71. “The Traitor”** Written by Grant Rosenberg; Directed by Michael Robison; airdate: April 25, 1999; *Guest Cast:* Fionnula Flanagan (Sorceress); Stewart McLennan (Franklin Cross); Elizabeth Shepherd (Jane Witherspoon); Mavor Moore (Arthur Middleton); Simon MacCorkindale (Reed Horton).

Alex is recruited by evil forces masquerading as Legacy Internal Affairs officers to study the “cancer” growing inside the Legacy. Manipulating Alex in this matter is a Legacy traitor and agent for the darkside named Reed Horton ... and he wants Derek Rayne dead and disgraced. Alex starts to question Derek’s leadership, even accusing him of being an assassin for evil. An old murder case in which Rayne committed murder in self-defense (against Horton) is reopened and reinterpreted so as to finger Derek as the “cancer” in the organization.

**72. “Double Cross”** Written by Grant Rosenberg; Directed by Michael Robison; airdate: May 2, 1999; *Guest Cast:* Fionnula Flanagan (Sorceress); Stewart McLennan (Franklin Cross); Elizabeth Shepherd (Jane Witherspoon); Mavor Moore (Arthur Middleton); Simon MacCorkindale (Reed Horton); Marya Delver (Diane Cross).

Derek is dead and dishonored—branded a traitor and assassin by Reed Horton (disguised as Franklin Cross, head of Legacy Internal Affairs). While Alex mourns the demise of her mentor and Cross takes

over the Legacy House, someone in hiding taunts Cross/Reed with knowledge of his evil actions. Cross soon makes an enemy of Nick, and then Kristin, when he orders her to investigate Boston House. Derek soon reappears, having faked his death, and he is determined to turn the tables on Reed Horton once and for all.

**73. “Initiation”** Written by Michael Berman; Directed by William Fruet; airdate: June 11, 1999; *Guest Cast:* Colleen Rennison (Miranda); Miles Robison (Miles Robertson); J. Douglas Stewart (Mr. Weaver); Susie Wall (Ms. Ashworth).

Young Kat is rebelling against her mother in all things, but worse than that, a friend at school named Miranda is seducing her with the dark side of witchcraft. Kat sneaks out at night with Miranda to practice black magic and energize a powerful amulet engraved with the devil’s face. When Rachel finds that Kat has gone out to the forest, she organizes a search which ends with Nick getting zapped by Kat’s pentagram amulet. Next, Kat zaps Alex to further strengthen her power amulet, and then heads towards a plateau of evil that only the love of her mother can stop.

**74. “Wishful Thinking”** Written by Michael Sadowski; Directed by Martin Cummins; airdate: June 18, 1999; *Guest Cast:* Rene Auberjonois (Milo); Francois Robertson (Janelle); David Lovgren (Peter Essenger); Martin Evans (Rupert Schnell); Tamara Gorski (Megan Torrence); Karin Konoval (Gypsy Woman).

In Paris, Derek’s friend Milo releases a beautiful djinn named Janelle from her bottle prison. Milo asks Derek to help him track her down when she flees and wreaks vengeance on a famous pianist who once treated her badly and refused to free her from entrapment in the bottle. Reporter Megan Torrence investigates the pianist’s accident as Milo realizes he is still Janelle’s master since he still has one unfulfilled wish to make. Milo wants the djinn to love him, but she is ruining all of her masters in response to her lifetime of exploitation and misuse.

**75. “Still Waters”** Written by Mark Stern and Alex Amin; Directed by Michael J. Rohl; airdate: July 15, 1999; *Guest Cast:* Robert Wisden, Cyrus Thiedeke, Joel Palmer, Norman Browning, Cheryl Wilson (Suzie); Virginia Capers (Grandma Rose); Dee Jay Jackson (Bartender).

A normal family moves into an old home on the water and is promptly haunted by the specter of an angry-looking little boy named Matthew. The family, friends of the late Grandma Rose, ask Alex to help them understand what they are facing. Nick and Alex look into the haunting, which seems to center around a dock on the water and a drowning, while Alex experiences dreams about her dead grandmother. Now Alex and Nick must use Grandma Rose’s strength to help a dead little boy cope with the anger he feels over his death ... before he hurts someone.

**76. “Brother’s Keeper”** Written by Garner Simmons; Directed by Helen Shaver; airdate: July 22, 1999; *Guest Cast:* Jeremy Ratchford (Jimmy Boyle); The Undertaker (The Soul Chaser); Alan “Grizz” Salzl (Williams).

Nick’s dead brother returns to the land of the living, pursued by the Soul Chaser, an evil minion determined to bring him back to hell. The Soul Chaser pursues the Boyle brothers to the castle and penetrates Luna Security. When trapped by this demon, Jimmy makes a deal to save his own life ... and to damn Nick’s soul to hell for all eternity.



**77. “Unholy Congress”** Written by David Tynan; Story by Richard Barton Lewis and David Tynan; Directed by Michael Robison; airdate: July 30, 1999; *Guest Cast:* Patrick Fitzgerald (Father Callaghan); Mark Lindsay Chapman (Dr. Mordecai Church); Elizabeth Shepard (Jane Witherspoon); Todd Waite (Ethan); Michael Puttonen (Jeremy); Simon MacCorkindale (Reed Horton).

Buried deep beneath Boston, a burial chamber imprisoning Dr. Mordecai Church, an 18th-century villain, is opened. The doctor soon emerges as a youth cult leader who devours the souls of his followers, and the Legacy attempts to recruit former member Father Callaghan to combat the evil. When Kristin decides to leave the San Francisco Legacy House and move back to Boston with her brother Ethan, she teams with Callaghan to find several missing girls who were victims of Dr. Church’s hunger for young souls. Making a dangerous situation worse, Reed Horton and Church form an unholy alliance which will feed Church the eternal souls of Reed’s worst enemies, Legacy members all.

**78. “Sacrifice”** Written by David Tynan; Story by Richard Barton Lewis and David Tynan; Directed by Michael Robison; airdate: August 6, 1999; *Guest Cast:* Patrick Fitzgerald (Father Callaghan); Mark Lindsay Chapman (Dr. Mordecai Church); Elizabeth Shepard (Jane Witherspoon); Todd Waite (Ethan); Michael Puttonen (Jeremy); Simon MacCorkindale (Reed Horton); Benz Antoine (Security Guard); Gavin Buhr (Excavation Foreman); Tim Cadeny (Ethan); Bruce Dawson (Preacher); Josh Ryan Evans (Being); Peter Haworth (Old Priest); Tania Reichert (Suzanne); John B. Lowe (City Engineer); Alan Robertson (Gilbert Penfold); Michelle Skalnik (Beth); Troy York (Jeremy).

Reed Horton kills Ethan, Kristin’s brother, and Kristin experiences a crisis of faith ... and renounces the Legacy. Derek and Nick decide to take the fight to Horton, aware that he has teamed up with that demonic soul-sucker, Dr. Church. Out for revenge, Kristin confronts Church on his own territory. She is unaware that hers is the very soul Church needs to be freed ... the last bastion of goodness.

**79. “She’s Got the Devil in Her Heart”** Written by Michael Berman; Directed by Michael J. Rohl; airdate: August 20, 1999; *Guest Cast:* Diane DiLascio (Anna/Karen Morgan); Ian Tracey (Mike); Garwin Sanford (David Royce); Lois Dellar (Nurse); Tristin Leffler (Julie); Dean Marshall (Chad); Patrick McManus (Young Soldier); Larry Musser (Sam); Lynda Padula (Bar Girl); Wren Roberts (Sailor); Tony Dean Smith (Jason).

Nick goes to visit a friend, a recovering alcoholic, who has fallen in love with Anna, a woman who is actually a supernatural entity, a succubus. Anna was once Karen Morgan, a woman who had a sexual relationship with Nick ... and now she wants him back. Meanwhile, Rachel is brought in on a homicide case by a detective, a case involving Anna’s ability to suck the souls out of men who have victimized her or other women. Now Anna wants Nick’s love to help her redeem herself...but she is still killing mortals to remain alive.

*Note:* This episode is a sequel to “Black Widow.”

**80. “Body and Soul”** Written by Michael Sadowski; Directed by Neill Sadowski; airdate: August 27, 1999; *Guest Cast:* Garwin Sanford (Detective David Royce); Tamara Gorski (Megan Torrence); Simon MacCorkindale (Reed Horton).

After confessing her love for Derek, Megan Torrence is murdered in an automobile rigged with explosives. When his personal psychiatrist turns up dead soon after, Derek realizes that the evil Reed

Horton is back, hellbent on killing all of Rayne's associates and friends. Horton infiltrates the Legacy House and leaves Alex a bizarre present: an ancient Babylonian artifact, a "Souvenir from Hell," made of obsidian. She must determine what its purposes and origins are if she wants to save Derek, now Horton's brainwashed captive.

**81. "Portents"** Written by Jonas Quastel; Directed by Derek de Lint; airdate: September 17, 1999; *Guest Cast:* David Birney (Father Elias); Kristin Lehman (Kristin Adams); Zachary Ansley (Brother Thomas Sebastian); Laura Sadiq (Stephanie).

An evil priest working for the dark side has discovered that a portal to hell exists below the Legacy House on Angel Island. When a monk is found dead, as if microwaved, Rachel and Alex investigate the incident. Meanwhile, Alex has a vision of Kristin, who has returned to Earth as a "Chosen One" to protect the Portal. As Kat falls ill, Alex uncovers a strange weather anomaly which may be a portent of the return of Satan, and now Alex, Rachel and the spectral Kristin must protect the portal under the house.

**82. "Gaslight"** Written by Grant Rosenberg; Directed by Martin Cummins; airdate: September 24, 1999; *Guest Cast:* Ocean Hellman (Sandy); Brandy Ledford (Vicky); Brennan Elliott (Tom).

One of Rachel's longtime patients, Sandy, inherits her family's estate as she turns twenty-one. Horror runs in Sandy's family, however: her parents committed suicide and her sister died in an accident. Now Sandy is psychologically scarred and suffering from anxiety-induced asthma. Derek and Rachel help Sandy to face her fears in the dark old mansion of her past.

## *Dark Skies* (1996–1997)

### CRITICAL RECEPTION

“Shamelessly derivative of both *X-Files* and the old '60s sci-fi series *The Invaders*.... At least in the case of *Skies*, the concept rip-off is carried off with reasonable care and panache.... Despite its watchability, *Dark Skies* is too much *X*, not enough ‘Why?’”—Ray Richmond, *Variety*, September 23–29, 1996, page 51.

“has tried to be a clone of *The X-Files*. But the producers of *Dark Skies* clearly failed to grasp the ingredients that have made the original so popular.... So far, so boring.”—C. Eugene Emery, Jr., *The Skeptical Inquirer*, March–April, 1997, page 20.

“one blatant rip-off worth watching ... a paranormal Cuisinart of *The X-Files*, *Independence Day*, *Three Days of the Condor* and even *Invasion of the Body Snatchers* ... its only original touch is that it is set in the early 1960s and immediately raises the possibility that ... government agencies ... or extraterrestrials ... may have been involved ... in Kennedy’s assassination.”—Joe Queenan, *People*, October 14, 1996, page 19.

“rips off *X-Files* with amazing gall ... so wholly derivative of *Files* as to be laughable, or at least snickerable.... The truth is, this is a damn silly show.”—Ken Tucker, *Entertainment Weekly*, September 20, 1996, page 59.

“the show reinterprets historical events of the last few decades ... as being directly connected to an extraterrestrial invasion that has been systematically covered up by the Federal Government. *Dark Skies* makes Oliver Stone’s flights of paranoia look like mental-health pamphlets ... [it] plugs into just about every loony aliens myth that defies constant debunking.”—John J. O’Connor, *The New York Times*, September 21, 1996.

### FORMAT

American history as we know it is a lie. Assassinations, wars, elections, and political changes are all merely covers for the most important battle in humanity’s short lifetime on this planet: the war against a horrific alien collective consciousness called “The Hive.” Leading this battle to save humankind from the aliens is a secret military organization called Majestic 12. Majestic 12 was formed by President Truman after the Roswell Encounter in 1947, and has been led by Captain Frank Bach (J.T. Walsh) ever since. Bach, a naval officer, is a zealot in his war against these evil aliens, and he always errs on the side of caution ... which means that he also fights public perception, and is a subscriber to the theory that the people don’t “need to know” what is really happening in the world. Thus Bach is both defender and conspirator, betrayer and hero, and in many senses, NBC’s *Dark Skies* is his series because it examines the decisions Bach makes, and the fallout from those choices.

*Dark Skies* begins in the early 1960s, when two idealistic young college graduates, John Loengard (Eric Close) and Kim Sayers (Megan Ward), come to Washington to serve in the Kennedy administration. Early in the show, John is recruited into the secret Majestic 12 organization, and Kim

is abducted by the alien Hive. After Kim is saved from the aliens and President Kennedy is assassinated, John and his lover hit the back roads of America, and try to reveal the truth about Majestic 12, which John considers a “counter” government, as well as warn people about the dangerous alien Hive.

Though *Dark Skies* ran for only one season, nineteen episodes in all, its canon is inclusive of six years of American history, so the Kennedy assassination, the Warren Commission, the war in Vietnam, and even the Watts riot are all reinterpreted on the show as being related to alien Hive activity. Real historical figures are also encountered to heighten the sense of reality, and so John and Kim encounter famous abductees Betty and Barney Hill (“The Awakening”), The Beatles (“Dark Days Night”), Howard Hughes (“Dreamland”), Norman Schwarzkopf, and Gerald Ford (“The Warren Omission”), Colin Powell (“Strangers in the Night”), and even Timothy Leary (“Bloodlines”).

Filled with period cars and costumes, *Dark Skies* is an impressive production from a visual standpoint, and its “revision” of American history is also a unique facet of this horror show. The series also managed to develop its own lexicon in its short time on the air, and thus viewers had all kinds of new lingo to learn, including “ART” (Alien Rejection Therapy), which was the method by which a human being could be freed from the spidery Hive alien. “Grays” were the hosts for the alien spiders, and they were believed to be a peaceful race which the Hive had already assimilated, technology and all. “Implantation” involved the enforced joining of a Hive spider parasite and a human being. The spiders themselves were known as ganglions or “Wigglers,” and a GCD was a Ganglion Containment Device, which kept the alien spider from escaping once it had been ARTed by a member of Majestic. Since the ganglions were all of one mind, they often offered humans a chance to join their collective consciousness by touching a multicolored sphere of light. The state of being one with the Hive was known as “singularity.” Also seen infrequently on the series (“Dreamland”) was a “wiggler” parasite, which would literally eat its way through the ganglion creature inhabiting a human being. When an alien ganglion is unsuccessfully removed from a human via conventional surgery, the process is called “cerebral eviction.” Finally, “throwbacks” were human beings who could genetically resist implantation, and John Loengard was one of their number.

Because *Dark Skies* garnered only very low ratings for NBC, a significant format shift occurred towards the end of the season. Megan Ward’s character, Kim Sayers, was virtually written out of the program. After delivering John Loengard’s baby, she willingly joined the alien Hive, and became an agent of evil along with Jim Steele, a Majestic 12 agent also “implanted” by the Hive. After losing Kim and his son to the enemy, John Loengard rejoined Majestic and teamed with a spirited Soviet agent named Juliet Stuart (played by *Star Trek Voyager*’s Seven-of-Nine, Jeri Lynn Ryan) and even had an affair with her. The series became more overtly violent, and at times resembled an action adventure rather than horror or science fiction. The new characters and infusion of a faster pace did little to help *Dark Skies*’ ratings or popularity, and the series ended with an unresolved cliffhanger, with Loengard, his son, and Juliet trapped on an alien ship outside the solar system, and control of Majestic transferred to Captain Albane, a traitorous officer who in the final show murdered Frank Bach in cold blood.

## HISTORY

The 1996 fall television season was the first one in America to feel the full, incredible effect of *The X-Files*’ overwhelming popularity (and incredible ratings). Chris Carter’s *Millennium*, UPN’s *The Burning Zone*, and NBC’s *Dark Skies* hit the airwaves simultaneously, and all three shows featured at

least one facet of *The X-Files* format, whether it be criminal profiling (*Millennium*), conspiracies and medicine (*The Burning Zone*), or a secret war against extraterrestrials (*Dark Skies*). Of these three new series, it is difficult to determine which one was treated worst by the media and the public. *Millennium* was branded overly violent, and viewers abandoned it quickly, though it was artistically conceived and almost perfectly executed. *The Burning Zone* was virtually ignored by both camps (fans and reviewers) from the get-go. *Dark Skies* was undoubtedly the show most viciously attacked by reviewers as an *X-Files* rip-off. Although the show's creators argued persistently that *Dark Skies* is not derivative of *The X-Files* and even went so far as to claim that they had only seen three episodes of Chris Carter's series (including "Ice") there are some notable surface similarities between shows. In particular: a similar man/woman partnership, a similar conspiracy involving shadowy government figures and aliens, and a similar obsession with exposing the "truth." Also, the woman partner in each series is abducted by aliens and returns altered in some fashion. Not many critics are inclined to look below the surface when reviewing a TV series, because they usually watch only the first episode, and these are difficult parallels to ignore. Still, *Dark Skies* producer James Parriott was quick to point out how his show would differ from the popular adventures of Mulder and Scully. He called *Dark Skies* the following:

... a blend of fact, informed speculation and dramatic license. The series premise is simply this: our future's happening in our past... Everyone has their favorite conspiracies, but we will challenge and expand on those by building a framework that adds consistency to the alien-awareness theories.<sup>1</sup>

So, where *The X-Files* took its appealing lead characters and pushed them through an ever-expanding conspiracy, *Dark Skies* went back into American history and reinterpreted said history in view of its central concept, an alien invasion. What made *Dark Skies*' claims of "not a rip-off" harder to swallow for many viewers and critics was that there were some *X-Files* personnel involved on *Dark Skies*, including editor James Coblenz and director Thomas Wright. Worse, handsome *Skies* star Eric Close seemed to have been bred from the same stable as David Duchovny (along with *The Burning Zone*'s Bradford Tatum, and *Strange World*'s Tim Guinee), and beautiful Megan Ward was playing a strong-willed redheaded character who was abducted by aliens (i.e., Dana Scully). J.T. Walsh's character, Frank Bach, was a version of "Cigarette Smoking Man," if people were inclined to see him that way. Even Jim Steele (Tim Kelleher) could be seen as a version of Nicholas Lea's double-agent Alex Krycek, since he was a dark-haired young agent and a physical threat to Loengard (much as Krycek was to Mulder). And, though *X-Files* by no means owns the "truth," it *did* popularize the slogan "the truth is out there," which became a pop-culture trademark of Fox Mulder's quest to learn about aliens and the government conspiracy of silence. *Dark Skies* made its central character, John Loengard, seem awfully similar to Mulder by constantly having "the truth" brought up in his presence, or by him directly. "The *truth* is down here ... third door on the right," Bach declares offhandedly in "The Awakening." "All we have left is the *truth*," "We're just trying to find out the *truth*," or "The *truth* is going to be buried," says Loengard in "Inhuman Nature," and so forth, forming the picture of an obsessed Mulder-like young man. Athletic and smart like Mulder, obsessed with the truth like Mulder, John Loengard had no room to breathe as an original entity, despite Eric Close's fine portrayal. So in character conception and dialogue, *Dark Skies* did not seem very original on a first glance, except in its choice to go back thirty years into our national history. Still, J.T. Walsh, a former *X-Files* guest star ("The List"), defended the show on the basis that it was different from *The X-Files*:

... I don't compare this to *The X-Files*. I think it's a fixed kind of deal with *Dark Skies* where you

have a known enemy, known heroes. You have a focus which is unlike the focus of *The X-Files*. Even in talking with Chris Carter, his view is that anything that cannot be explained is fit material for *The X-Files*. I don't think you have that with our show.<sup>2</sup>

Were more viewers aware of cult TV history, they might have seen that the TV series *Dark Skies* most closely mimicked was not actually *The X-Files*, however, but Gerry and Sylvia Anderson's 1969-70 series *UFO*, the precursor to the more popular *Space: 1999*. This British program starred Ed Bishop as Straker, the secretive head of a top secret military organization (not Majestic 12, but S.H.A.D.O. [Supreme Headquarters Alien Defense Organisation]) assigned to fight a secret war against vicious aliens who could "hide" inside human beings. The aliens of *UFO* were fabulously advanced (as in *Dark Skies*), and they also subverted humans and turned them into saboteurs at the drop of a hat. Straker's personal life was a mess because of his insistence on secrecy (again like Bach) and he often worried excessively about the funding for his top-secret organization (another facet of Bach's character on *Dark Skies*). Straker was also obsessed with recovering a UFO so as to take advantage of the alien technology (a plot element of "Survival," and "A Question of Priorities" on *UFO*, and "Ancient Future" and "White Rabbit" on *Dark Skies*). In essence, both series concern a military man of great power and leadership skill, but of repressed emotions, who mounts a secret war against an insidious alien race bent on the subjugation of Earth. Where the two series differ is in approach, which is probably a result of historical context. *UFO* was produced pre-Watergate, so Straker was seen as a hero despite the fact that he kept his war a secret from the people of Earth. This action was seen as necessary and heroic by the makers and storytellers of *UFO*. In contrast, *Dark Skies* saw Bach as an ambiguous figure. Being produced post-Watergate and Iran-Contra, the makers of *Dark Skies* viewed Bach with understandable suspicion as a dictator and fascist as well as an effective leader for Majestic 12. In essence, *Dark Skies* and *UFO* are the same story seen through different eyes and times, but few viewers of *Dark Skies* have probably ever seen a single episode of *UFO*, which in all fairness, is a far more interesting series than *Dark Skies*.

*Dark Skies* aired on Saturday nights at 8:00 on NBC for one season, a night and time slot when science fiction and horror tend not to succeed since many of the young audience is out at the movies or on dates during the weekend. So, it is little surprise that the expensive *Dark Skies* failed to find an audience, even in an era when *The X-Files* is so popular. NBC had heavily promoted the series early on (as a kind of sequel to the 1996 feature film blockbuster *Independence Day* of all things!), but it was obvious by midseason that changes would have to be made in the *Dark Skies* format. To make the series more appealing, a new female lead was enlisted in Jeri Ryan. Adding a beautiful woman to the cast of a sinking TV series is an old ploy, used on *Batman* in 1969 (with the addition of Yvonne Craig as Batgirl), *Space: 1999* (with Catherine Schell as Maya) and even *Voyager* (with Jeri Ryan—again—as Seven), and Ryan's presence did indeed add some much-needed heat to the final episodes of *Dark Skies*. Even her considerable and charismatic presence was not enough life support to resuscitate this case, however. Although the series was aired regularly in late 1996 and early 1997, NBC banished the show from its spring schedule. It aired no episodes in April of 1997, and held back the critical last two episodes of the season until the very end of May. By then, cancellation was already a foregone conclusion.

When it became obvious that the series would not return to NBC for the 1997-98 season, the producers inserted a voiceover by star Eric Close over the last few minutes of the finale, "Bloodlines," which suggested that the war against the Hive would be won, and that Loengard was speaking to us from a victorious human race in the twenty-first century (when he would have been over sixty-five years old).

Although there was apparently a period of negotiations between the producers of *Dark Skies* and UPN which concerned the continuation of the show, that deal soon fell through, and *Dark Skies* ended its run after less than two dozen stories. Ironically, both *Dark Skies* and *The Burning Zone* aired only nineteen episodes before vanishing. In hindsight, NBC should have had a little more faith: *Sleepwalkers*, the series which replaced *Dark Skies* on Saturdays in 1997, aired only three times before being canceled! *Dark Skies*, like all series, probably would have grown considerably had it lasted another season. On the set of *Voyager* almost a year later, Jeri Ryan delivered her postmortem on *Dark Skies*:

I think NBC buried it ... It was a great show that had wonderful potential ... Granted, when I came in, the ratings were already in the basement and NBC had written it off. Adding a new character was a desperate, last-ditch attempt to try and do something—anything....The show was never on consecutively more than three weeks. You can't build an audience that way. It was really unfortunate.<sup>3</sup>

Although *Dark Skies* was canceled after only one season on network TV, it generated a rabid fan following on the Internet, and particularly in Europe and other foreign markets, perhaps because its fine production values beautifully captured a bygone (and interesting) era in American history. *Dark Skies* was so popular abroad in late 1997 that *Entertainment Weekly* had this to report:

*Dark Skies*, the *X-Files* clone that couldn't buy an audience when it was on NBC last season, is such a success abroad that its studio, Columbia, is considering several two-hour movies solely for the international market.<sup>4</sup>

The much discussed series of movies never materialized, but even today, *Dark Skies* creators Friedman, Zabel, and Parriott plan to return the series to the limelight with either a feature film, a series of graphic novels, or a new syndicated TV series. Nothing has materialized as of this writing, and there is, sadly, more bad news to report. In early 1998, J.T. Walsh, who played Captain Bach, died of a heart attack at age 54. He was honored by his friend and co-star Jack Nicholson at the 1998 Oscar ceremony. During his career, he appeared in more than sixty films (including *Breakdown* [1997]) and had made a name for himself as a great character actor. *Dark Skies* fans will remember him forever as Captain Bach, a great and interesting character on what could often be a mediocre series.

## CRITICAL COMMENTARY

Right off the bat, people may ask why *Dark Skies* is even covered in a book about “terror” TV. After all, this NBC series involves aliens from outer space, so it should be classified as science fiction, not horror, right? Well, not precisely. *Dark Skies* is certainly horror in orientation if one puts the emphasis on the *Dark* rather than the *Skies*, because it depicts in graphic terms an old genre concept: the infiltration of the human body by a malevolent outsider. In other words, *Dark Skies* is horror for the same reason that *Alien* (1979), *The Thing* (1982), or *Invasion of the Body Snatchers* (1978) are horror. Specifically, the show raises the pointed question of “who” to trust. Who is human? Who is alien? These questions first generate paranoia and eventually fear, the hallmarks of any gripping horror TV show. In the opening episode of *Dark Skies*, for instance, the horror dynamic is established when a wiggler, an alien ganglion, exits from the mouth of an American farmer suddenly and violently, and then scurries away, loose, through a laboratory. Graphic effects, tight framing, shaky camera work, and other tried-and-true horror techniques are employed to bring this frightening scene to vivid life.

*Star Trek* or *Babylon 5*, this ain't.

As the series progresses, so does the escalation of horror images. In one thoroughly nauseating scene (in "Hostile Convergence"), Jack Ruby eats a sandwich in which an alien parasite is hidden. The squishy worm thing leaps into his mouth and proceeds inside his body as he writhes with pain. Gross! Likewise, claustrophobia is exploited for horrific effect in the Vietnam-based adventure "White Rabbit" as Loengard journeys through a tiny, alien-dug tunnel under the earth. The feeling generated, as in all episodes of *Dark Skies*, is one of terror ... not illumination or wondrous discovery, as in science fiction TV. Whether it be a siege on a house in the woods ("We Shall Overcome") or fear of a baby which may be not quite human (à la *Rosemary's Baby*) in "Burn, Baby, Burn," the horror in *Dark Skies* is never far from view.

In this regard, *Dark Skies* is a beautifully conceived and executed series. Technically, it is close to perfect, and at its core is a great horror idea well exploited: what we know to be true is *not* true at all, and our beliefs are based on lies, deceit, and cover-ups. The very premise of the show pulls the rug out from under viewers, which leaves them, as we have seen in other shows, susceptible to the feelings of terror which *Dark Skies* generated. The *Invaders of the Body Snatchers* premise, that an alien inhabitation can turn your loved ones into soulless automatons, has not lost any of its creepy appeal since the 1950s, and is effective here (as it is in *Prey*.) The story even has the interesting subtext that the alien invaders, a collective consciousness, are actually communist in intention. "We have no color. We have no conflict," one Hive alien tells Loengard in Mississippi, at the height of the Civil Rights Movement. Since the Cold War is over, this plot detail has probably been mostly unexamined in *Dark Skies*, but it nicely adds complexity to stories such as "Dreamland" and "Both Sides Now."

Add a likable cast, some great period details, and a dollop of interesting "counter" history, and it is not at all difficult to determine why this recent cult series still maintains a vocal and active fan base. The ingredients are all in evidence for a hit, yet despite this excellent central concept, *Dark Skies* has almost no frisson, and no real "great" stories that stand out either. It is slow-paced and dull, a passive viewing experience, instead of one that is constantly challenging and involving, like *The X-Files*.

This lack of excitement comes from several material factors. The first is that the series leads, Ward and Close, are not allowed to express much real humanity. They relate to one another as business partners, or government agents, yet they are supposed to be lovers who depend on one another for their lives. They go about their tasks grimly, without any sense of humor or perspective whatsoever about their situation. Of course, an alien invasion is hardly a laughing matter or a subject for humor, but it is the interplay and humor in *The X-Files* which makes it so memorable and powerful a series. Humor is a necessary part of life, and Scully and Mulder can see humor in their work, whereas Loengard and Sayers may as well be machines for all the emotional depth they demonstrate together. Where there is no humor, there is no resemblance to reality, and more specifically no acknowledgment of why humanity deserves to be saved from the Hive. What differentiates the human race from Hive is individuality, but John and Kim never truly come across as real individuals. Though star Eric Close often gives voice to some very flowery-sounding monologues (usually in voiceover narration) about what Loengard has learned from his particular experience, these moments of insight come across as "lessons learned," as heavy-handed morals, rather than as any true epiphany from the character's inner mind. They are not born naturally of the character, but rather as an afterthought needed to provide some focus (again, usually moral) to the adventure that has just culminated.

Additionally, the main characters of *Dark Skies* seem to lack a clear purpose, and the precision and



clarity of Mulder and Scully. On *The X-Files*, viewers always know what the goal of the mission is. There is a forward thrust to the series, an inexorable pull in a single direction. On *Dark Skies*, it is never really clear why John and Kim go on the run after Kennedy is assassinated. Once on the run, they contact and even team up with Majestic on a regular basis, to the point that Bach still considers Loengard an agent for the organization, so why run away in the first place? Is it supposed to be an homage to *The Invaders*, which also saw a man fighting aliens on the run, or is it just because the show needed a manageable format, and the creators wanted to avoid the case-by-case “agent” approach of Chris Carter’s *The X-Files*? It strains believability that Leonard and Sayers are just “randomly” in the right place at the right time for an adventure every time they enter a new city. Of course, this “randomness” is mitigated somewhat by the fact that the series makes it plain that much time passes between stories, but still it is troubling that these people seem to be on an extended road trip to nowhere, with no real destination or specific purpose.

The revisionist history aspect of *Dark Skies* is interesting, but it tends to diminish the show’s strengths. In particular, *Dark Skies* is guilty of the old *Young Indiana Jones* fallacy, a law of genre television which states that the main character of a given series set in the past must encounter “famous” figures on a weekly basis. In other words, Loengard and Sayers are always at the right place at the right time to see history in the making, and meet the “right” people. In a semi-serious format like *Zelig* (1983) or *Forrest Gump* (1994), this approach is successful, even illuminating. In a straight-faced drama which is supposed to be taken as “reality,” the preponderance of “famous” figures serves only to undermine the believability of *Dark Skies*. It is a juvenile approach to history which comes off as an attempt to be “educational,” like the youth-minded *Voyagers* (1981) or the aforementioned *Young Indiana Jones*. What about the people behind the scenes of great events? *Dark Skies* seems to think that by putting Kim and John in contact with Robert Kennedy and others, their adventures will resonate with viewers, but the opposite is true. The regular characters are not nearly as much fun as the weekly guessing game of what great historical figure the guest of the week is supposed to be portraying.

What is perhaps more disturbing than this sophomoric belief that in every adventure a famous face should show up is that *Dark Skies* is less-than-vigilant in its historical accuracy. It personifies public figures in sometimes atrocious manner. Robert Kennedy, a great man and guardian of civil rights, for instance, is silenced on *Dark Skies* when an illicit affair with Marilyn Monroe is uncovered (“The Warren Omission”) by Majestic. This plot point makes the heroic former attorney general seem as if he is concerned only with his reputation, and the episode even has the audacity to bring up the notion (in a totally offhanded manner) that Kennedy himself killed Monroe! There is no evidence of such a crime, or Kennedy’s culpability, and there has *never* been any evidence of such a crime or culpability, so this bit of *Dark Skies* is rumor-mongering and gossip at its worst. It has nothing to do with history. Norman Schwarzkopf is also presented as an opportunist (in the same show), and even Carl Sagan is given some ill-considered treatment. The man who wrote *Contact* and educated a generation with *Cosmos* (1981), a man who spent the better part of his life informing Americans about the possibility of life on other planets, is made (on *Dark Skies*) to be a willing part of Bach’s conspiracy of silence (in “Strangers in the Night” and “Bloodlines”). What an insult! In some cases, these famous figures are still living, and in other cases, they are not around any more to defend their reputations, yet *Dark Skies* seems willing to arbitrarily cast historical figures as villains and collaborators solely for the purpose of entertainment. God forbid anybody should ever consider this show historically accurate. Harry Truman, Dwight Eisenhower, Allen Dulles, Gary Powers, Ronald Reagan, and George Bush (in voice-over only) are all characterized as having been associated with cover-ups and conspiracies that

exist only on the reality of this show. Real history will judge these figures for their actions, *Dark Skies* need not recast them as foils for John Loengard to get its simple-minded points across to viewers.

Another unfortunate side effect of the alien conspiracy in *Dark Skies* is that humans tend to be taken off the hook for their flaws. In “We Shall Overcome,” the Hive is responsible for the disappearance of three civil rights workers in Mississippi. It is an easy, dishonest, and facile answer to a real human horror that an outside force would be responsible for this hate crime. In truth, human precepts, views, beliefs, and experience are to blame for racism, not an alien race. Although this is a nice way to assuage Caucasian guilt, many people fought and died to stop racism in the 60s, and their sacrifice does not deserve to be trivialized by the offhand suggestion that it was really “bad” aliens who were responsible for such negative human behavior.

It is also difficult to stand behind a show that demonstrates no loyalty whatsoever to its own internal continuity. Take Frank Bach’s wife, for example. In two early stories she is beautifully portrayed in human terms by the underrated Nancy Stephens of *Halloween* (1978) and *H2O* (1998). As soon as *Dark Skies* requires this character to be an element of a major plotline (in “White Rabbit”) however, Stephens is discarded in favor of the younger, more beautiful, and better known Jennifer Hetrick (Vash of *Star Trek: The Next Generation*). The same substitution is carried out with the character William Paley ... a man played by different actors every time he appears. What happened to continuity? Why were different actors assuming recurring roles week in and week out?

And, worst of all, it is absolutely unforgivable the way *Dark Skies* loses sight of Kimberly Sayers and the things she stands for. This character, arguably the more human and more likable of the main duo, is made to turn to the side of the Hive when Steele shows her an image of Majestic’s duplicitous nature (“Both Sides Now”). Because of this, the character abandons John Loengard (the father of her child) and *all of humanity*, yet Kim Sayers knew all along that Majestic could not be trusted. For her to suddenly lose faith in her lover because of his relationship to Majestic is a contrived solution. This seems an excuse to get rid of Ward and Sayers all together, especially since Loengard picks up (romantically) with Juliet Stuart in later episodes. Megan Ward went from being a substantial co-star to a walk-on in her own series! Her character does not appear at all (except in a photograph) in “Strangers in the Night,” and she has only a cameo in the final episode “Bloodlines.” Her fate is left unresolved when the series ends, as if it is no longer important to John Loengard. If that is true, then Loengard is no hero at all, but a real louse! It was clear when the series began that Loengard and Sayers loved each other, and were committed to each other, but then the writer’s pen undid all that good work so that a “new” woman could be added to the series. *Dark Skies*, like *The Burning Zone*, wins no points whatsoever for its format changes, because they are carried out in a Machiavellian fashion which does not jibe with what the audience already knows of the main characters.

*Dark Skies* has its share of conceptual problems, from the format changes to the *Young Indiana Jones* fallacy, yet it remains the most thematically consistent of its 1996-97 competitors despite these flaws. *The Burning Zone* never knew what it wanted to be, and *Millennium* has gone through several drastic format changes in three years. And, as it marched towards its conclusion, *Dark Skies* became more sure-footed and self-assured. The humor factor escalated (“To Prey in Darkness” revealed that Beatnik poetry was the invention of the Hive, and “Burn, Baby, Burn” reported that the Grays’ favorite food was strawberry ice cream), the pace was stepped up, the stakes were higher, and the producers even had a little fun with history (Steele killed a peacenik in “Bloodlines” and then assumed his identity. The dead man’s name: Charles Manson!). All these facets assure that cultists will “keep watching the

(Dark) Skies,” even into the 21st century. It is currently being rerun on the Sci-Fi Channel as part of its “Sunday Conspiracy” night, along with the inferior *The Burning Zone*, and the dull *The Visitor*.

## CAST AND CREDITS

*Cast:* Eric Close (John Loengard); Megan Ward (Kimberly Sayers); J.T. Walsh (Frank Bach).

*Credits: Created by:* Bryce Zabel and Brent V. Friedman. *Music:* Michael Hoenig. *Editor (various episodes):* James Coblentz, Andrew Cohen, Troy Takaki. *Production Designer:* Curtis A. Schnell. *Director of Photography (various episodes):* Bill Butler, Steve Yaconelli. *Producer:* Bruce Kernan, Brad Markowitz. *Co-Executive Producer:* Brent V. Friedman. *Executive Producers:* James D. Parriott, Joseph Stern. *Executive Producer:* Bryce Zabel. *Co-producers:* Bernie Laramie, Mark R. Schilz. *Supervising Producers:* Steve Aspis, Steve Beers.  *Casting:* Judith Holstra, Robert J. Ulrich, Eric Dawson, Carol Kritzer. *Executive Story Editor:* Melissa Rosenberg. *Associate Producer:* Robert Parigi. *Unit Production Manager:* Mark R. Schilz. *First Assistant Director:* Chris Stoia. *Second Assistant Director:* Bob Kozicki. *Post-Production Supervisor:* Jack Morgan. *Costume Design:* Darryl Levine. *Consultant:* Jeff Wachtel. *Camera Operator:* David Parrish. *Script Supervisor:* Randa Rai Stack. *Production Sound Mixer:* Thomas E. Allen, Sr. *Gaffer:* Rick Sands. *Key Grip:* Frank Keeves. *Second Unit Director:* John Moio. *Art Director:* Michael Fox. *Set Decorator:* Crista Schneider. *Property Master:* Brad Breitbarth. *Casting Associate:* Shawn Dawson. *Makeup Artist:* John Rizzo. *Production Accountant:* Hilton Smith. *Key Hair:* Andria Misushima Jones. *Transportation Coordinator:* Steve Hellerstein. *Special Effects Coordinator:* Bruce Mattox. *Stunt Coordinator:* John Moio. *Location Manager:* Brett Williams. *Production Coordinator:* Ingrid Lohne. *Assistant Production Coordinator:* Stacy Radford. *Script Coordinator:* Adam Sigel. *Assistant Editor:* Marilyn Adams. *Music Editor:* Marty Wereski. *Sound Supervisor:* William Dotson. *Sound Effects Designer:* Mark Larry. *Rerecording Mixers:* Marti D. Humphrey, Ray O’Reilly, Mike Olman. *Area 51 Visual Effects Crew:* Tim McHugh, Wayne England, David Carlson, Justin Hammond, David Jones. *Alien Effects Designed and Created by:* Todd Masters Company, Greg Johnson, John Shea, Bernhard Eicholz, Thomas J. Bacho, Jr., Jeremy Aeilo, William Fesh, Gloria Munoz. *Effects Production Coordinator:* Kristine Morgan. *Assistants to Producer:* Umberto Autore, Jr., Julia Bent, Stacey Kosier, Barbara Whiting. *Camera and Lense:* Panavision. *Color:* Technicolor. *Video Facility:* 4MC/Digital Magic. *Sound:* Sony Pictures Studio, Culver City, California. A Bryce Zabel Production. Columbia Tristar Television Distribution, a Sony Pictures Entertainment Company.

## EPISODE GUIDE

**1. “The Awakening” (Parts I & II)** Written by Bryce Zabel and Brent V. Friedman; Directed by Tobe Hooper; airdate: September 21, 1996; *Guest Cast:* Robin Gammell (Dr. Hertzog); Lee Garlington (Betty Hill); Paul Gleason (Nelson Rockefeller); Francis Guinan (Mark Simonson); John M. Jackson (Pratt); Charley Lang (Dr. Halligan); Conor O’Farrell (Phil Albano); G.D. Spradlin (Grantham); Scott Allan Campbell (Popjoy); Tim Kelleher (Jim Steele); Basil Wallace (Barney Hill); Mike Kennedy (Allen Dulles); Don Moss (Hubert Humphrey); Marilyn Rockefeller (Mrs. Lincoln); Al Sapienz (Gary Powers); Gregory White (Mr. Chesney); Alan Fudge (Major Friend); Thomas Knickerbocker (General Brown); Nancy Stephens (Mrs. Bach); Brad Reese (Lieutenant); Grant Mathis (Cloaker #3); George Marshall-Ruge (Cloaker #4); Jerry Whiddon (Goodwin); Fred Saxon (Reporter); David Svensson (Man in Crowd); Don Clark (Newscaster); James F. Kelly (Robert Kennedy); Amanda Plummer (Abducted Woman).

On May 1, 1960, U.S. Air Force pilot Gary Powers pursues a UFO over the Soviet Union in his U-2 spy plane, and is subsequently captured by Russian forces. On October 3, 1961, John Loengard and girlfriend Kimberly arrive in Washington, D.C., full of enthusiasm and idealism in hopes of joining President Kennedy's new frontier. Loengard goes to work investigating Project Blue Book and meets with Betty and Barney Hill, two UFO abductees. On his way home, Loengard is persuaded to drop his interest in the case when he is threatened by Captain Frank Bach of Majestic, a top secret organization in the government. Loengard makes it his mission in life to expose Bach and Majestic, but is eventually recruited into the organization and given access to both extraterrestrial technology and an alien corpse. Loengard's first job is in Boise, where he confronts a farmer who is serving as a host to a spidery alien parasite. Kimberly is abducted by alien "grays," the host organism for these spiders, and returned home with one of the parasites inhabiting her body. Using an experimental alien rejection therapy, John saves Kimberly's life and vows to make all knowledge of the aliens and Majestic known to the public and the White House ... a vow which is threatened when President Kennedy is assassinated.

**2. "Moving Targets"** Written by Bryce Zabel and Brent Friedman; Directed by Thomas J. Wright; airdate: September 28, 1996; *Guest Cast:* Richard Fancy (James Forrestal); Richard Gilliland (Jesse Marcel); Tim Kelleher (Jim Steele); James F. Kelly (Robert Kennedy); Charley Lang (Dr. Halligan); Conor O'Farrell (Phil Albano); Hansford Rowe (President Harry Truman); Leon Russom (Roscoe H. Hillenkoetter); Mary Kay Adams (Bainbridge); Terry Bozeman (Goodwin); Jack Lindine (Jack Ruby); Braid Blaisdell (Base Commander); Stephen James Carver (Balfour); William Frankfather (Cop); Brent Huff (Clint Hill); Locky Lambert (Jackie Kennedy); Ashley Smock (Corporal); Andrew Walker (Ground Control Worker).

On the heels of President Kennedy's assassination, Loengard and Kimberly flee to Oklahoma, and Bach searches the president's corpse for signs of the alien artifact Loengard gave him. Robert Kennedy sends Loengard to Dallas to recover the piece himself, but Majestic is already there in force, as is Majestic agent Jim Steele, who is now possessed by the alien Hive. Loengard's contact at the hotel in Dallas is Jesse Marcel, the public relations officer at Roswell, New Mexico, on July 2, 1947—the night the aliens landed—and he has quite a story to tell: how an alien representative met with President Truman at Roswell and demanded the unconditional surrender of the planet. Furthermore, the army opened fire on the UFO and shot it down, picking up alien casualties in the process.

**3. "Mercury Rising"** Written by James D. Parriott; Directed by Tucker Gates; airdate: October 19, 1996; *Guest Cast:* Tim Kelleher (Jim Steele); John Mese (Tigh Young); Natalija Nogulich (Dr. Helen Gould); Conor O'Farrell (Albano); Peter Van Norden (Henry Kissinger); Pat Crawford Brown (Hotel Clerk); Glenn Morshower (Mission Controller); Steven Barr (Policeman); Don Clark (TV anchor); Darryl Rocky Davis (Gate Guard); Henry Harris (Fisherman); Todd Ferries (Gary Augatreux); George Lugg (Bartender); Grant Mathis (Cloaker).

In January of 1964, Kimberly experiences disturbing visions involving an astronaut in need of help, as well as an uncontrollable need to head to Florida and Cape Canaveral, where a rocket is being launched for the moon. Kimberly makes contact with the astronaut, a man who was abducted by the Hive at the same time she was, even as Majestic and Steele close in on her position. Loengard and Kim learn that the astronaut was part of Midnight Wing, a black-ops elite corps of space jocks who were assigned to destroy a massive alien spaceship in orbit on the night Kim was abducted from her apartment. Kim undergoes regression hypnosis and recalls an experience with a second astronaut—

one who has been implanted by the alien Hive and who may now have the key to sabotaging a Saturn rocket launch.

**4. “Dark Days Night”** Written by Brent V. Friedman and Brad Markowitz; Directed by Matthew Penn; airdate: October 26, 1996; *Guest Cast:* Kathleen Garrett (Hargrove); Stanley Kamel (Dr. Ron Burnside); Tim Kelleher (Jim Steele); Charley Lang (Dr. Halligan); Conor O’Farrell (Phil Albano); Gina Phillips (Marnie Lane); Joseph Carberry (Cabbie); Earl Carroll (Doorman); Carey Eidel (Brian Epstein); John H. Freeland (Usher); Jerome Hoban (Ed Sullivan); Sandra Ellis Lafferty (Mrs. Weatherly); James Lancaster (Kenneth Parkinson); Karen Maurise (Neighbor); Dominic Oliver (Technician); Chris Weal (Michael Hagerty); Carmine Grippo (Ringo Starr); Tim Michael McDougall (Paul McCartney); Rick Anthony Pizaria (George Harrison); Joe Stefanelli (John Lennon).

In February of 1964, Beatlemania begins in the United States, coinciding with the Fab Four’s appearance on *The Ed Sullivan Show*. Loengard and Kimberly intercept a radio transmission from the Hive which mentions a Broadway, New York, address, and fly to the Big Apple, where almost immediately they run into Jim Steele. Loengard and Kim become involved in a suspicious marketing survey which is utilizing subliminal messages to sway the minds of Americans toward suicide. This is the Hive’s plan to kill all the human “throwbacks,” citizens of Earth who cannot be successfully implanted with alien ganglion.

**5. “Dreamland”** Written by Steve Aspis; Directed by Winrich Kolbe; airdate: November 2, 1996; *Guest Cast:* Joey Aresco (Jack Gettings); Jack Conley (Rawlings); Tim Kelleher (Steele); Tyler Layton (Susan); Madison Mason (Howard Hughes); Louan Gideon (Hive Gambler); Andrew Hawkes (George Dover); Scott Jaeck (Cochran); Gary Carter (Casino Cashier); Paul Terrell Clayton (Lieutenant); Mark McPherson (Doorman).

John and Kimberly make for Las Vegas, out-of-money, and Kim is hired at a casino. Once she begins her job as a cocktail waitress, Kim hears the voices of the Hive nearby, and she and John are escorted to meet Howard Hughes, who has been observing the Hive conspiracy. Hughes suggests using Kim’s abilities in a sting operation which will out the alien “commies,” and reveal the true reason they are pooling their winnings from the casino. As Kim goes into danger, John discovers the Hive plan has something to do with “Dreamland,” Area 51, and a secret tunnel dug into the side of a desert mountain.

**6. “Inhuman Nature”** Written by Melissa Rosenberg; Directed by Rodman Flender; airdate: November 9, 1996; *Guest Cast:* John Dennis Johnson (Castor Boehm); James F. Kelly (Robert Kennedy); Charley Lang (Dr. Halligen); Deborah May (Mrs. Boehm); Conor O’Farrell (Albano); Maury Sterling (Mark Waring); Ronald William Lawrence (Kauffman); Zach Hopkins (Boehm Son); Jeff Juday (Activist); Seth Murray (Boehm Son); Vanessa Munday (Jennifer Bach); Nancy Stephens (Mrs. Bach); Lauren Zabel (Boehm Daughter).

In April of 1964, John and Kim meet in secret with Attorney General Robert Kennedy, who asks them to be patient until he is elected president and can issue an order which makes Majestic public knowledge. In the meantime, John and Kim investigate a report of strange lights over a Wisconsin farm. The farmer who owns the place is frightened because aliens have eviscerated his cattle with surgical precision. A second cow has been implanted with the embryo of a human baby designed to serve as a compatible host for the Hive ganglion.

**7. “Ancient Future”** Written by James D. Parriott and Gay Walch; Story by Bryce Zabel, Brent V. Friedman, and Gay Walch; Directed by Lou Antonio; airdate: November 16, 1996; *Guest Cast:* Charley Lang (Halligen); Conor O’Farrell (Albano); Eric Steinberg (Reverend Gary); Sam Vlahos (Tug Barrow); Steven Ford (Phillips); Dana Gladstone (Ernst Mittermyer); Joseph Whipp (General Thompson); Robert Arce (Hiver); Don Clark (Anchorman); Dan Erickson (Mission Controller); Roger Hewlett (Safe Suit Man); Dale Ishimoto (Tlinget Chief); Matt Roe (Traveler).

In 100 BC, an alien ship crashed in Alaska, and now, in March of 1964, Kim and John are investigating an alien legend about flying rocks. According to an Indian storyteller of the Tlinget tribe, a heavenly “Father” from the stars followed the spaceship down and warned that the ship should not be touched, lest destruction rain down on the tribe. An earthquake strikes in Alaska, registering 8.4 on the Richter scale, and the chasm to the crashed spaceship opens. John investigates the ship and experiences a terrifying vision of the future as Kim explores the possibility that the alien “grays” are an enslaved race conquered and implanted by the Hive, despite their superior technology.

**8. “Hostile Convergence”** Written by Javier Grillo-Marxuach; Story by Bryce Zabel and Brent V. Friedman; Directed by David Jackson; airdate: December 7, 1996; *Guest Cast:* Robert Carradine (Ronnie Zamora); Diane Cary (Cassie); Jamie Denton (Rob Winter); Stephanie Faracy (Joan Sayers); Richard Gilliland (Jesse Marcel); Tim Kelleher (Steele); Charley Lang (Dr. Halligan); Jack Lindine (Jack Ruby); Conor O’Farrell (Albano); Lisa Waltz (Andrea Sayers); Sam Whipple (J. Allen Hynek); Conrad Bachmann (Mayor Holm Bursum); David Brisbin (Joe Edermeyer); Terrence Evans (Clark Balfour); Mike Kennedy (Allen Dulles); Wendy Robie (Kate Balfour).

A police patrolman in New Mexico spots a UFO land as Kim struggles with family responsibilities and returns home to be a part of her sister’s wedding. Meanwhile, Majestic and Jim Steele independently plot to silence an imprisoned Jack Ruby, who is still “half” Hive. John determines that the New Mexico UFO was actually a U.S. test aircraft built with UFO technology, and follows Kim to Denver rather than be used as Majestic’s patsy. Kim learns that her sister is planning to marry a Majestic agent, and Jim Steele arrives in Denver.

**9. “We Shall Overcome”** Written by Bryce Zabel and Brent V. Friedman; Directed by James Charleston; airdate: December 14, 1996; *Guest Cast:* Roger Aaron Brown (Reverend Pool); Tracy Fraim (Andrew Mendel); Charley Lang (Dr. Halligan); Dean Norris (Clayton Lewis); Conor O’Farrell (Albano); Raphael Sbarge (Mark Simonson); Wayne Tippit (J. Edgar Hoover); Lorraine Toussaint (Etta Mae Tillman); Mike Kennedy (Allen Dulles); Kim Robillard (Allen Dalton Roberts); Art Bell (William Paley); Arell Blanton (General Nathan Twining); Edward Edwards (Foote); Terence Mathews (Lance Taylor); Sean A. Moran (Lionel Tillman); Don Moss (Hubert Humphrey).

Three civil rights workers are missing in Mississippi, the most racially segregated state in the country, and John and Kim fear the vanishing is a result of alien interference. Meanwhile, Frank Bach attempts to raise more money for Majestic’s budget so he can change its policy from observation to confrontation. In the basement of a Mississippi church, Kim discovers some unusual alien biological matter and a white racist who is rapidly becoming Hive. As John and Kim conduct an ART on the racist, Majestic takes samples of the biological material and then burns the church ... leading to a fevered jurisdictional debate between Bach and J. Edgar Hoover.

**10. “The Last Wave”** Written by Melissa Rosenberg; Directed by Steve Beers; airdate: January 4, 1997; *Guest Cast:* Brent David Fraser (Jim Morrison); Conor O’Farrell (Albano); Brittany Powell

(Gina); Christopher Wiehl (Nat); Mark Bramhall (Whitman); Daniel Markel (Robert Dewey); Carl Ciarfalio (Supervisor); Kristoffer Ryan Winters (Surfer).

In the summer of 1964, John and Kim head to sunny California for the funeral of an old college buddy who died under mysterious circumstances. With the help of a flighty young poet named Jim Morrison, the duo from Washington soon learns that the Hive is hatching another plot to subjugate humanity, this time one that involves human physiology and a process which will make implantation more feasible. Loengard and Kim follow the plot back to a sewage treatment, but they must act fast if they are to save two other friends from their college days.

**11. “The Enemy Within”** Written by Brad Markowitz; Story by Bryce Zabel and Brent V. Friedman; Directed by James Charleston; airdate: January 11, 1997; *Guest Cast:* Dorie Burton (Lucy Loengard); Tim Kelleher (Steele); Kent McCord (Mr. Loengard); Joan McMurtrey (Jo Loengard); Sean O’Bryan (Ray Loengard); Conor O’Farrell (Albano); Terry Bozeman (Goodwin); Tim Chaote (Jeff Gale); Mike Kennedy (Allen Dulles).

In August of 1964, Loengard’s brother, Ray, is abducted and implanted by the Hive. John returns to the family farm with Kim hoping to cash some saving bonds his father gave him when he was ten. Meanwhile, Steele breaks into Majestic headquarters even as Frank Bach worries about the Warren Commission learning of Hive involvement in JFK’s assassination. John and his older brother Ray deal with old family tensions at the same time John must discover a way to free Ray from the alien mind.

**12. “The Warren Omission”** Written by Bryce Zabel and Brent Friedman; Directed by Perry Lang; airdate: January 18, 1997; *Guest Cast:* Jeri Lynn Ryan (Juliet Stuart); Jay Avocone (Kincaid); Dennis Cregan, James F. Kelly (Bobby Kennedy); Gary Lockwood (Earl Warren); Conor O’Farrell (Albano); Drew Snyder (Gerald Ford); Arthur Taxier (George Barrett); Wayne Tippit (J. Edgar Hoover); Susan Griffiths (Marilyn Monroe); Mike Kennedy (Allan Dulles); Gunther Jensen (Captain Norman Schwarzkopf); Jack Ritschel (Clyde Tolson).

Robert Kennedy asks John Loengard to testify before the Warren Commission about the existence of the Hive and the role of Majestic in domestic policy. A beautiful blond agent for Majestic, Juliet Stuart, threatens to kill John and Kim should they testify, but they go ahead, fingering Majestic, revealing its history, and describing the activities of the Hive. When Frank Bach is compelled to testify before the commission, he perjures himself and fingers Loengard as Kennedy’s assassin. When John is threatened with criminal charges for his “perjurious” testimony, Kennedy stages a raid on Majestic, only to find himself compromised by a moral lapse in his personal life.

*Note:* This show makes extensive use of clips from episodes including “The Awakening,” “Moving Targets,” “The Enemy Within,” and “We Shall Overcome.”

**13. “White Rabbit”** Written by Bryce Zabel and Brent V. Friedman; Directed by James Contner; airdate: February 1, 1997; *Guest Cast:* Jeri Lynn Ryan (Juliet Stuart); Art Chudabala (Tay Ma); Brian Cousins (Lev); Jennifer Hetrick (Mrs. Bach); Tom O’Brien (Kellogg); Conor O’Farrell (Albano); Arell Blanton (Nathan Twining); Bradford English (General Brown); Phong Vo, Ray Chang (VC Soldiers); Thomas Woolen (Radio Operator).

On Kim’s birthday, John is kidnapped and drafted for a UFO recovery mission in Vietnam. He teams with Bach to find a downed craft, which is the last surviving bit of alien technology from an

underwater base located in the Gulf of Tonkin. In an effort to get John back, Kim kidnaps Bach's wife and shares with her some information about what her husband *really* does for a living. Juliet Stuart is also angered by Frank Bach's lies and joins Kim's crusade to expose the truth ... but can she be trusted?

**14. "Shades of Gray"** Written by Brad Markowitz; Directed by Perry Lang; airdate: February 8, 1997; *Guest Cast:* David Carpenter (Grisham); Charley Lang (Halligan); Conor O'Farrell (Albano); Jamie Rene Smith (Monica); Grant Mathis (Cloaker); Liza Smith (Svetlana).

Kim and Loengard are now allied with Majestic again, in hopes that they can change some of Bach's more fascist tendencies. In their first mission back with the secret government organization, John and Kim team with Soviet Juliet Stuart to bring down a Hive space vehicle. What they actually catch with their crop circle ploy, however, is a Gray alien. After the Hive parasite is removed from the captured Gray creature, it communicates peaceably with Kimberly, once Hive herself ... and she soon learns that she is pregnant.

**15. "Burn, Baby, Burn"** Written by James D. Parriott; Directed by Steve Posey; airdate: March 1, 1997; *Guest Cast:* Jeri Lynn Ryan (Juliet Stuart); Tim Kelleher (Steele); Duane Davis (Briggs); Keith Diamond (George Lewis); Paul Lieber (Dr. Merrick); Charley Lang (Dr. Halligan); Conor O'Farrell (Albano); Vaughn Armstrong (Minkus); Troy Winbush (Quentin); Dean Denton (Cop); Stephen Quadros (Lab Worker); Vince Ricotta (Simon Rodia); Marquette Frye (Garland).

In August of 1965, Kim is a month overdue delivering her baby, and Majestic fears there will be genetic abnormalities in the child because of Kim's history with the Hive. The Watts Riot is in full swing, and Jim Steele is behind the scenes. While Kim is visiting a specialist in L.A., she is abducted by Steele and the Hive. John and Juliet head into strife-ridden Watts to save her from the alien laboratory but it is too late: the baby and Kim are now members of the Hive.

**16. "Both Sides Now"** Written by Melissa Rosenberg; Directed by James Contner; airdate: March 8, 1997; *Guest Cast:* Jeri Lynn Ryan (Juliet); Tim Kelleher (Steele); Jeff Juday (Kendall); Charley Lang (Halligan); Conor O'Farrell (Albano); Timothy Omundsen (Rubin); Don Stark (Gallagher); Bradford English (General Brown); Brett Wagner (Hiver).

In late September of 1965, a captured Kimberly Sayers is encouraged to touch the alien sphere of light so that she can experience the singularity of the Hive, even as John and Majestic search desperately for her. Kim soon shows up at an anti-war campaign in Berkeley, and Juliet Stuart is assigned to bring her back or kill her if she has already accepted singularity. John disobeys Bach's orders and joins Juliet as she attempts to stop the Hive from releasing a deadly contaminant during an antiwar rally. Although Hive plans are stopped cold, John soon learns the hard way that Kim has really joined the enemy ... for good.

**17. "To Prey in Darkness"** Written by Bryce Zabel and Brent V. Friedman; Directed by Thomas Wright; airdate: March 15, 1997; *Guest Cast:* Jeri Lynn Ryan (Juliet Stuart); Spencer Garrett (Ed Hawkins); Tim Kelleher (Steele); Robin Gammell (Carl Hertzog); James Karen (Harry Carruthers); Jack Lindine (Jack Ruby); Marilyn McIntry (Dorothy Kilgallen); Conor O'Farrell (Albano); Mitchell Ryan (William Paley); Ryan Cutrona (Detective); Alan Gelfant (Beatnik); Barry Grayson (TV Technician); Fred Saxon (Reporter).



In early November of 1965, 53 feet of film from the 1947 Roswell UFO encounter turn up missing from the Majestic vaults, and Bach assigns Loengard and Juliet to recover the material. They follow the trail to New Orleans and Dr. Hertzog, the first physician on Majestic, but he claims innocence. The next lead involves Jack Ruby and Dorothy Kilgallen, a gossip columnist. Juliet and John try to force newspaperman Ed Hawkins not to air the footage, which Steele and Kim Sayers are also trying to steal for the Hive. There is a citywide black-out and loyalties are tested as Kim, John, Steele, and Albano cross swords.

**18. “Strangers in the Night”** Written by Brad Markowitz; Directed by Michael Levine; airdate: May 24, 1997; *Guest Cast:* Jeri Lynn Ryan (Juliet Stuart); Simon Billig, Wolfgang Bodison (Colin Powell); Charley Lang (Halligan); Conor O’Farrell (Albano); Beata Pozniak, John Saint Ryan (Colonel Miranov); Joseph Urla (Carl Sagan); Silas Weir Mitchell (Kuleshov); Kirk B. Woller (Pavel); Grant Mathis (Cloaker); Wiley Pickett (MP).

In August of 1966, the Russian counterpart to Majestic falls under attack, so Bach sends Loengard, Juliet, and a young Colin Powell on a rescue mission to discover the identity of the attackers. The team finds a ruined headquarters and a few survivors who were conducting a mysterious experiment. The mission becomes personal when John discovers photos of Kim and his son, and Juliet realizes that her mentor, Colonel Miranov, may have been implanted by the Hive. Meanwhile, Frank Bach recruits a skeptical Carl Sagan into Majestic.

**19. “Bloodlines”** Written by Bryce Zabel and Brent V. Friedman; Directed by Perry Lang; airdate: May 31, 1997; *Guest Cast:* Jeri Lynn Ryan (Juliet Stuart); Tim Kelleher (Steele); James F. Kelly (Robert Kennedy); Mike Kennedy (Allen Dulles); Ernie Lively (Dr. Cliff Rasmussen); Don Most (Timothy Leary); Conor O’Farrell (Albano); Christopher Thomas (William Paley); Joseph Urla (Carl Sagan); Bryan Clark (Ronald Reagan); Don Moss (Hubert Humphrey); Lindsey Lee Ginter (Sgt. Linson); Arell Blanton (Twining); Jonathan Zabel (Ray Loengard).

In June of 1967, during the summer of love, Juliet and Loengard meet with Timothy Leary, who has firsthand knowledge of some very dangerous drug cubes. The pushers of these bad cubes, which link right into the Hive collective consciousness, are none other than Steele and Kim Sayers. Majestic’s Gray alien, who is slowly dying because an unknown double agent exposed him to influenza, translates a message from his species for John Loengard, a message which informs John that his own bloodline will determine the future of human life on Earth. In hopes of saving his son, John volunteers for Project Intruder, a suicide mission which will land him aboard the Hive mothership just beyond the fringe of Earth’s solar system.

## *The Burning Zone (1996–1997)*

### CRITICAL RECEPTION

“The idea is *Outbreak* meets *The X-Files*, and everyone involved in *The Burning Zone* keeps a straight face ... it offers the loopy delights of a cut-rate, over-the-top horror movie.... Overall this new show helps demonstrate just how good *The X-Files* is at keeping its balance, one foot in reality and one in the unexplained. *The Burning Zone* is always threatening to go completely out of control. It might as well play to that strength and follow its silliest, campiest instincts.”—Caryn James, *The New York Times*: “A Virus That Speaks of a Deadly World Plot,” Tuesday, September 3, 1996, page C12.

“a show that went through so many transformations in its brief 19-episode run that no viewer who saw the first show would recognize the last.... Viewers had the underlying premise yanked out from under them every few weeks. Despite some strong engaging performances and memorable episodes early on, *The Burning Zone* never stuck with one premise long enough to develop an audience following.”—Roger Fulton and John Betancourt, *The Sci-Fi Channel Encyclopedia of TV Science Fiction*, Warner Books, 1997, page 106.

“a show that was so stupid, and yet made such pretentious claims to being science-fact oriented that it made me want to throw shoes at the television. (For those of you who missed it, it featured snarly fashion-model scientists chasing intelligent hive-mind vampire zombie viruses with flame throwers.)”—Peter Huston, *The Skeptical Inquirer*, May-June 1998, page 9.

### FORMAT

*The Burning Zone* follows the dangerous adventures of an “elite” bio-crisis team dedicated to wiping out diseases which threaten to strike quickly and endanger many innocent Americans in a series of “attacks” sometimes referred to on the series as “The Plague Wars.” The first team on this UPN series consists of Daniel Cassian, a no-nonsense doctor with Level 92 clearance and a firm grip over his own emotions; Edward Marcase, a brilliant virologist who survived a childhood bout with Ebola but lost both his parents to the disease; Kimberly Shiroma, a molecular-geneticist-pathologist recruited from the World Health Organization; and Michael Hailey, a liaison to defense intelligence who is responsible for the team’s safety and security. Unfortunately, there is much stress among this team because of clashing egos, views, and philosophies. Kimberly’s fiancée died working with Edward at an Ebola infection site and she blames Marcase for his death. Marcase, in turn, disapproves of Cassian’s by-the-numbers, sometimes cold-hearted approach to preventing outbreaks. And Shiroma vehemently dislikes the fact that Edward is a “mystic” who believes that fighting diseases is a supernatural quest. This mismatched group can and indeed does travel anywhere in America, working in secret underground laboratory installations designed to protect the country against “the terrors to come.” Prime among those terrors is the New Dawn, a villainous organization dedicated to the annihilation of humankind and the supremacy of Earth’s original lifeform: a hive-mind, sentient virus which has been “asleep” for 15,000 years.

As *The Burning Zone* progresses, Shiroma and Marcase leave the team (to spearhead an important investigation in Zimbabwe), only to be replaced by the “rebel” doctor, Brian Taft.

*The Burning Zone* has the unusual distinction of being the goriest TV series ever to air on network television. In the pilot, a man infected with the evil virus spits a thick mass of gelatinous goop into an open cut on Hailey's bare chest. This material is green, syrupy, and thoroughly nauseating in appearance. This stomach-churning moment cheerily sets the tone for the remainder of this short-lived UPN series. Unsuspecting teenagers burn up suddenly in "Arms of Fire," leaving only bone-fragments and ash-covered Nikes behind. Firefighters develop huge tumorous growths in seconds, which bulge and explode, in "Critical Mass." In "Death Song," a disease causes "skeletal collapse," which affects joggers who are literally tortured as bones all over their bodies suddenly snap and jut out of their skin. In "The Last Endless Summer," worm organisms crawl inside people, right beneath the flesh, and begin to feast on internal organs as if the human body is a salad bar. In "Elegy for a Dream" poisonous tattoo ink causes stomachs to literally erupt and explode. "On Wings of Angels" features contaminated cigarettes which cause the human head to split right up the back of the skull and ooze blood. In other words, *The Burning Zone* is not a show to watch over lunch.

Diseases are not the only bailiwick of Daniel Cassian's crack team on *The Burning Zone*. In nineteen episodes, the unit also managed to clean up a contaminated building ("The Silent Tower"), expose a mystic faith healer conducting "psychic surgery" ("Hall of the Serpent"), discover the gateway to hell ("Lethal Injection"), recover an occult relic called "The Eyes of Odin" from a neo-Nazi group ("Midnight of the Carrier"), and expose the dangers of diet drugs ("The Last Five Pounds Are the Hardest").

Stylistically, *The Burning Zone* mimics *The X-Files* in some important ways. Marcase and Shiroma share the same bickering relationship as Mulder and Scully do, and the series (in its last seven episodes) provides onscreen legends to let the audience know where precisely (in the country) the team is located on its current "mission."

## HISTORY

By the fall of 1996, nearly every American television network worth its salt was taking serious notice of Fox's wholly unexpected success with the paranormal/horror hit *The X-Files*. For NBC, this success was to be translated (hopefully) into two new fall series: the alien invasion/conspiracy drama *Dark Skies*, and the more whitebread "serial killer on the loose" drama called *Profiler*. For Fox, it meant the advent of *Millennium*, a new series from *X-Files* creator, Chris Carter. The network with the most to lose (and to gain) in this battle, however, was surely the newbie UPN (United Paramount Network) which after a year of regular broadcasting still had only one high-profile program to its roster: *Star Trek: Voyager* (1995-2001). In point of fact, UPN was already ahead of the *X-Files* clone curve. It had picked up on the *X-Files*'s popularity a year earlier in 1995, and gone the conspiracy route with *Nowhere Man* (starring Bruce Greenwood). That unique series had gained a strong cult following, a foothold for any genre show, but UPN mysteriously drydocked the program after one season and decided to take a different tack with *The Burning Zone*, a sort of latter-day *Andromeda Strain* about a team of scientists fighting deadly diseases on a weekly basis. The recent successes of the book *The Hot Zone*, a true-to-life account of an Ebola outbreak in Virginia, and *Outbreak* (1995), a feature film pitting Dustin Hoffman, Rene Russo, Cuba Gooding Jr., Morgan Freeman, and Kevin Spacey against hemorrhagic fever in California, undoubtedly contributed to UPN's decision to dump conspiracy TV for disease TV. As creator Coleman Luck and James McAdams described the central tenet of their new show:

Today's battle to save humanity is fought in sterile labs with petri dishes and test tubes for

weapons. Virologists and geneticists are the new warriors.<sup>1</sup>

It all sounded promising, and *The X-Files* had proven that “disease”-centered episodes (such as the second season entry “F. Emasculata”) could be accomplished with a substantial dose of credible-sounding science and an equally large helping of gore ... two critical components in making diseases interesting (and believable) to the home audience. *The Burning Zone* took *The X-Files* as its primary source in another way as well: characters Marcase (Dean Morgan) and Shiroma (Tamlyn Tomita) initially had a sparring relationship much akin to Mulder and Scully, with Marcase accepting and embracing the paranormal and spiritual, and Shiroma relying on hard science to cure the disease of the week. In another regard, *The Burning Zone* seemed like another popular series: *The A-Team*. Along with wily government operative Daniel Cassian (Michael Harris) leading the team of scientists was security expert Michael Hailey (James Black), a latter day Mr. T. Together, this team could cure any disease, beat up any villain, out *Mission: Impossible* any conspiracy, and always save the day. Cassian and his team were fighting diseases, and kicking a little ass along the way.

Binding the early *Burning Zone* episodes together is a supernatural, almost mystical bent which some genre magazines dubbed “new age,” but which in fact seems to plumb a variety of spiritual and religious sources. In “The Silent Tower,” a drug which was causing the stimulation of a portion of the brain causing terror allowed Marcase to go on a kind of vision-quest to meet with the parents who died in his childhood (from Ebola). In “St. Michael’s Nightmare,” a traveling vendor who was actually the devil (guest Rene Auberjonois) sold a priest a flower which had been plucked from “the Tree of Knowledge” and could stimulate violence in anybody who smelled its sweet perfume. In “Lethal Injection” Marcase took a trip to the afterlife and was saved by angels, and so forth. Audiences were not quite sure what to make of this mix of science and spiritualism, and ratings remained quite low for *The Burning Zone*.

In response to the tepid viewer response, UPN staged a behind-the-scenes massacre: the two series stars, Dean Morgan and Tamlyn Tomita were dropped from the format with only the briefest of explanations. The mysterious Cassian, a character who had gained substantial popularity among viewers because of his hard-nosed, no-nonsense attitude, was upgraded to male lead #1, and James Black, as Hailey, became male lead #2. Joining the cast was a new young doctor named Taft, played by Bradford Tatum. Unlike Dean Morgan, Taft was no thoughtful “lab geek”: he was a motorcycle-riding, womanizing “cool guy” who could hang with Cassian and Hailey and not seem out of place. The new changes also involved a serious downgrading of the scientific portions of the show, and *The Burning Zone* became, essentially, an action series with a medical bent.

At the same time as the cast changes occurred, a new style of cinematography was introduced to *The Burning Zone*: all the action was viewed through a shaky handheld camera which had a propensity to shoot the protagonists from cockeyed angles. This was an attempt to make the action more “immediate,” and give the show a distinctive look (like the dark *Millennium*, or the “gritty” *NYPD Blue*), but it, like the cast changes, failed to garner higher ratings. In fact, the changes did more damage than good, and *The Burning Zone*’s ratings dropped even lower. The series was canceled after just nineteen episodes, and failed to gain the kind of devotion which *Nowhere Man* had so easily engendered. UPN did not learn its lesson with *The Burning Zone* either, and in 1997 it canceled another popular series with a cult following: *The Sentinel*. Since then, UPN has changed its mind yet again: renewing *The Sentinel* and even granting the genre series *7 Days* a second season in which to develop just such a passionate following. But *The Burning Zone* is, rightfully, history. It’s newest

home is on the Sci-Fi Channel, where it airs after *Dark Skies* and before *The Visitor* as part of the “Sunday Conspiracy” viewing block. The stars of *The Burning Zone* have moved onto other work with Tatum appearing on *Charmed* (“Secrets and Guy”), James Black supporting Kurt Russell in the 1997 epic *Soldier*, and Tomita (of the *Babylon 5* pilot) having a featured role in *Living Out Loud* (1998) with Holly Hunter.

Prominent genre guest stars on *The Burning Zone* include *Deep Space Nine*’s Rene Auberjonois in “St. Michael’s Nightmare,” Tony Jay of *Beauty and the Beast* in “The Silent Tower,” Nicholas Lea, Krycek on *The X-Files*, in “Hall of the Serpent,” Michael Cavanaugh of the new *Dark Shadows* in “Night Flight,” Keith Szarabajka of *The Golden Years* in “Lethal Injection,” Grace Zabriskie of *Twin Peaks* in “Touch of the Dead,” and Tim O’Connor of *Buck Rogers in the 25th Century* in “Midnight of the Carrier.”

## CRITICAL COMMENTARY

Another one-season wonder (or blunder?), UPN’s *The Burning Zone* is one of the strangest and most schizophrenic horror shows to air in recent memory. In this case, “strange” is not necessarily a compliment, and many episodes of this short-lived drama simply leave viewers shaking their heads in disbelief and confusion at the bizarre proceedings. Perhaps the most unusual and significant facet of *The Burning Zone* is its unceasing (but ill-advised) attempt to blend science and religion into a cohesive TV formula. This (failed) idea could have been an interesting conceit, to be certain. After all, the lead characters are all highly skilled, highly trained scientists who have gone through years, almost decades, of medical training. Yet in adventure after adventure these men and women of science find themselves exploring the spirit/body connection in ways they would never have anticipated during their residency. This sounds like a philosophy that could open up all sorts of avenues for character growth and development, yet the formula was applied so haphazardly on *The Burning Zone* as to be merely bizarre.

Perhaps the one element which makes *The X-Files* so endlessly engrossing is its pointed contradiction between science and the paranormal. Each lead character (Scully and Mulder) champions a cause in every story, and the two belief systems, one reason-based and one intuition-based, are juxtaposed and tested. Thus the audience is afforded two interesting worldviews in each story. Before the format changes which sunk the series, *The Burning Zone* tried for (and missed) a similar juxtaposition of concepts: medicine vs. spiritualism. In “St. Michael’s Nightmare,” for instance, an epidemic of violence sweeps Philadelphia, but the root cause of the malady focuses the team’s microscopes on religion, not modern medicine: a traveling salesman, possibly the Devil himself, has spread a magic elixir about the town, an elixir made from a venomous fruit which was believed to have existed on the Tree of Knowledge in Paradise! This revelation, cemented by a 15th-century artist’s rendering of the fruit in the Garden of Eden, put science and religion on equal footing, and *The Burning Zone* saw both ideologies as “valid” explanations for events, in this case the rapid proliferation of a disease.

“Touch of the Dead” is another *Burning Zone* episode which tried to balance spiritual and scientific concepts. In this story, Cassian is infected with a deadly disease which cannot be completely cured by science. On the contrary, for his new remedy to be successful, Cassian must look inside himself and find a “reason to live.” In other words, medicine alone is not enough to cure people; it must be accompanied by a spiritual component, a healthy soul, even. “Arms of Fire” also pushed this agenda when a boy in danger of spontaneously combusting (?!) survives the ordeal because of his willingness to pray. Likewise, “Hall of the Serpent” exposes a psychic surgeon (Nicholas Lea of *The X-Files*) as a

fraud who uses his powers for selfish gain. As the heroes solemnly state at the end of this show, “When God heals ... it brings out hope and peace ... not fear.” If this sounds hokey in print, imagine it in play on your TV screen.

The ultimate expression of *The Burning Zone*’s spiritual philosophy was seen in “Lethal Injection,” an episode in which a hellish afterworld is visited by Marcase after he is forced to take an experimental drug. In the hellish afterlife, he is threatened by whispering, black-clothed ghouls who can remove a man’s spirit by touch, and eventually he is protected by organisms he terms “angels.” At the end of the drama, it is theorized that this “City of the Dead” was created as an entrance to hell for angels who had fallen from grace. Quite a significant discovery for a biocrisis team, isn’t it? In one “adventure” they prove the existence of an afterlife, hell, and angels! As farfetched as this concept sounds, at least there is evidence of a worldview at work. Damningly, it is a variation, and a weak one, of *The X-Files*’ worldview. Though it is rewarding that *The Burning Zone*’s creators attempted to infuse their series with a subtext, it is not clearly nor cleverly enunciated in “Lethal Injection” or any other story. On the contrary, the spiritualism vs. science just seems rather corny.

A hoary subtext is not the only problem which infects *The Burning Zone* episode roster. Another element to consider is what this author now terms “The Burning Zone Fallacy”: the straight-faced belief (of this program) that a disease can be isolated, diagnosed, cured, and its effects *totally* reversed in every story ... some of which occur in just a few hours of story time! Though this is drama and some bending of the rules is permitted, even necessary, this series simply asks us to suspend disbelief too much. How long has AIDS been with us now? Or cancer? Yet *The Burning Zone* asks us to believe that this elite team of doctors can stop outbreaks faster than a speeding bullet. There is never a disease the team cannot handle, and most of these horrible plagues do not even leave behind pock marks or scars on their victims. This oversight is particularly damaging. Should not some diseases leave behind at least residual indications of their presence? *The Burning Zone* could have avoided this ridiculous “disease of the week” problem with just one or two bits of ingenuity. First off, each episode could have been part of a multipart arc. Imagine a three or four-part story, taking place over a span of months, with the characters learning of a deadly disease in the first hour, spending the second hour charting and diagnosing it, and working during the third or fourth hours to create and administer a cure. Granted, this is not a perfect solution, but it would have allowed the series to mirror reality to at least a marginal degree. As it stands, the speed with which the biocrisis team dispatches such deadly illnesses is simply too hard to believe. Dramatic license is one thing, ridiculous plotting is quite another.

When not mixing spiritualism and science and curing diseases lickety split, *The Burning Zone* finds itself dependent on another cathode tube pit of vipers: clichés. In “Night Flight,” the audience is treated to another kind of disaster movie: *Airport* meets *Outbreak*. A deadly fever strikes an airline in midflight and (fortunately!) the series protagonists happen to be aboard, with all their high-tech equipment to boot! As passengers die, the oldest and most irritating of all *Airport* clichés rears its ugly head. The pilot falls sick and—gasp!—there is the fear that nobody on board can fly the plane! In this story, a co-pilot (Michael Cavanaugh) manages to stay alive just long enough to land the plane before succumbing, naturally, to the evil disease of the week.

Other shows in *The Burning Zone* roster are so strange it is hard to see how they fit into the series format at all. “Midnight of the Carrier,” for instance, is a rip-off of *Raiders of the Lost Ark* (1981) with Cassian’s team fighting Nazis for possession of a Third Reich relic called the “Eyes of Odin.” At

the climax, this dangerous occult tool falls into the wrong hands, but it sprays laser beams and kills all the Nazis who have attempted to abuse its power ... a blow-by-blow replay of the *Raiders* finale (wherein the Ark of the Covenant rains heaven's wrath down upon the baddies, also Nazis, of course).

After about a dozen or so confused episodes like this (including a ridiculous one called "Faces in the Night" in which the team metamorphs into law enforcement agents to hunt down a serial killer), *The Burning Zone* was redesigned to be more user friendly, but it got worse ... much, much worse. It had been obvious to viewers early on that Marcase and Shiroma were little more than cardboard Mulder/Scully wannabes and that the mysterious Dr. Cassian was the most interesting of the series' rather shallow dramatis personae. Call it the "Dr. Smith Factor": just as Jonathan Harris's character on the original *Lost in Space* (1964-68) overpowered the series leads with his semivillainous creation, so did Michael Harris steal scene after scene from his co-stars as the enigmatic cold fish Dr. Cassian. The audience knew almost nothing about this fascinating man except that he was ruthlessly efficient in pursuing his own agenda. When the format changed, Cassian became the show's main protagonist, reflecting his immense popularity with viewers. However, the writers mitigated this popularity almost instantly by revealing literally everything they could about this previously secretive man: his home life, his family, his boss, his working situation, and so on. What had made Cassian so interesting early on was that audiences did not really know where he stood on a variety of issues and matters. He was a mystery man, and an attractive, interesting one. In the revised show, Cassian became a true blue hero, saddled with a boss, a hierarchy, a family, and so forth ... and what little fun was left on *The Burning Zone* was surgically removed.

In the end, *The Burning Zone* thoughtlessly ditched its spiritualism/science debate to concentrate on hard action-adventure. The new Doctor, Taft, was a motorcycle-riding ladies' man (replete with sexy haircut) who could cure diseases and fight bad guys with equal dexterity. The show was also given a new visual veneer: sudden (and purposeless) zooms, distorted angles, fast-motion, hand-held camerawork, and the like. These stylistic touches gave the show a less stodgy feeling and did succeed in generating an unhinged, immediate feel to the series, but the hyped-up camerawork could not hide the basic banality of the new stories. One episode ("Death Song") was a remake of *The Bodyguard* (1991), with Hailey protecting (and romancing) a beautiful rock star in danger, another was a variation on *Playing God* (1997), with Taft forced to administer medical care to a sick gangster. The series became *The A-Team* meets *The Hot Zone*, and it pleased nobody.

On a more basic level, *The Burning Zone* might not have caught on simply because it was too grotesque, too graphic in its depictions of human bodies breaking, melting, bending, and hurting. People tend not to be very comfortable with the subject of this series: diseases, bacteria, death, and men in blue protective suits. While it is true that horror should never be comfortable or easy, it is also true that some shows and films hit too close to home. We all live with the specter of disease every day, but is it really necessary to see gut-wrenching depictions of Ebola and the like cloaked as entertainment, week in and week out? In a bestseller, or a hit movie, this is acceptable, but *The Burning Zone* asked its audience to tune in not once, but every week. In the end, that was medicine few audience-goers wished to take.

## CAST AND CREDITS

*Cast:* Michael Harris (Dr. Daniel Cassian); James Black (Michael Hailey). Episodes #1–11: Jeffrey Dean Morgan (Dr. Edward Marcase); Tamlyn Tomita (Kimberly Shiroma); Episodes #12–19: Bradford Tatum (Dr. Brian Taft).

*Credits: Created by:* Coleman Luck. *Executive Producers:* Coleman Luck, James D. McAdams, Robert A. Papazian, James G. Hirsch. *Music:* Martin Davich. *Co-producer:* Dean W. Barnes. *Producer:* Harker Wade. *Associate Producer:* Billy Crawford. *Director of Photography (various episodes):* Geoffrey Erb, Bradford May, Geoff Schaaf. *Art Director:* Andrew Neskromny. *Editor (various episodes):* Brian L. Chambers, Bill Luciano, Tom McQuade, Chuck Weiss. *Unit Production Manager:* Harker Wade. *First Assistant Director:* Richard Denault. *Second Assistant Director:* Cynthia Potthast. *Casting:* Penny Perry. *Set Decorator:* Ethel Robins Richards. *Visual Effects Supervisor:* Richard Kerrigan. *Sound Supervisor:* Michael Guitierrez. *Supervising Music Editor:* Allan K. Rosen. *Costume Designer:* Catherine Adair. *Costume Supervisor:* Buffy Snyder. *Panaflex Camera and Lenses:* Panavision. *Sound Mixer:* Richard Van Dyke. *Stunt Coordinator:* Greg Barnett. *Main Title:* Pittard Sullivan. Sandstar Productions, filmed in association with Universal Television.

## EPISODE GUIDE

**1. “Pilot”** Written by Coleman Luck; Directed by Bradford May; airdate: September 3, 1996; *Guest Cast:* Peter Guilfoyle (Dr. Glinden); Peter Frechette (Dr. Alan Reinhardt); Julie Araskog (Ann Glinden); Denis Arnat (Frank Matthews); Mika Boorem (Little Girl); Lucas Dudley (State Trooper); Dwayne Foster (Technician); Kevin Fry (Agent); James Harper (Lt. Colonel); David Jackson (News Anchor); Todd Kimsey (M.P. Guard); Mitchell Longley (Van Driver); Jordan Marder (Communications Specialist); Heather McPhaul (Mother).

An expedition to the Talamanca rain forest in Costa Rica faces terror when the archaeologists on the team open up a cave that has been sealed for 15,000 years and inadvertently release a terrible, sentient disease from its long hibernation. In Reston, Virginia, a team consisting of molecular-geneticist-pathologist Kimberly Shiroma, security man Michael Hailey, and unconventional leader Edward Marcase is isolated in a government lab to investigate and eradicate the deadly virus, which one man refers to as “the angel of death.” The virus seems to choose its victims very carefully, and the eyes of those infected appear hemorrhagic. When the medical team learns that the hive virus is sentient, conscious, and in control of warrior viruses like ebola, its members realize that humanity must work fast to defeat this ancient invader.

**2. “The Silent Tower”** Written by Coleman Luck; Directed by Michael Lange; airdate: September 10, 1996; *Guest Cast:* Damon Whitaker (Mr. Williams); Dena Dietrich (Mrs. Pride); Julius Harris, Edward Evanko, Tony Jay (The Chairman/Wilson Pride); Annie Grindlay (Rachel Marcase); Nicholas Fappone (Young Edward); Brandon Adams (D-Ray Drummond); Clayton Murray (Security Guard); Raymond Turner (Hazmat Man); Christopher Kirby (Dark Figure).

With team administrator Reinhardt permanently reassigned, Marcase’s bio-crisis team is put under the authority of the enigmatic Dr. Cassian. Their first assignment together: investigate an 80-story building in Chicago where seventy-nine deaths, all suicides, have occurred over a span of two years. Once inside the tower, Marcase disappears, leaving only a flashlight, a blood trail, and an empty helmet behind. In reality, Marcase has been abducted by a young black man suffering from paranoid hallucinations after a botched break-in attempt. Soon Marcase is also exposed to a synthetically engineered chemical warfare agent which resembles mist, but which causes slow asphyxiation and stimulates the part of the human brain which modulates terror.

**3. “St. Michael’s Nightmare”** Written by Robert Gilmer; Directed by Scott Brazil; airdate:



September 17, 1996; *Guest Cast*: Ray Abruzzo (Father Stefan); Theodore Bikel (Other Priest); Jacqueline Obradors (Marian); Rene Auberjonois (Mr. Dicketts); Joshua Cox (Danny Cox); Rachel Davies (Woman in Crowd); Gerry Donato (Angry Man); Gunther Jensen (Crowd Person #1); Joyce Greenleaf (Crowd Person #2); Ray Lykins (Young Guy).

A priest who has lost his faith after witnessing the suicide of one of his flock encounters a strange man, Mr. Dicketts, with an unusual truck filled with artifacts and antiques. Mr. Dicketts gives the saddened priest seeds from the Tree of Knowledge, which he claims will give the holy man insight into good and evil. The bio-crisis team goes to investigate the Festival of St. Michael's, the triumph of good over evil, in Philadelphia because priests have been responsible for outbreaks of violence at the festival for the last two years and Cassian feels that a new biological agent is involved. Once in Phillie, the team finds the populace short-tempered, the "virus" of violence thriving, and interestingly, a flowering plant which produces the same mysterious fruit that is said to have grown in the Garden of Eden.

**4. "Arms of Fire"** Written by Coleman Luck III; Directed by Michael Katleman; airdate: September 24, 1996; *Guest Cast*: Craig Kirkwood, Scott Allan Campbell, Michael Bryan French, Joel Swetow, Markus Flanagan, Mitchell Langley, Katherine Olsen, Patrick Y. Malone, De'aundre Bonds, Bernard Hocke (Coroner); Richard Gross (Desk Sergeant); Jane Marshall (Principal Bubeck); Chante Frierson (Keisha Marshall); J.J. Boone (Gym Teacher); Stephen Poletti (Chief of Security).

At a high school gym in a poor area of town, an African-American teenager spontaneously combusts, leaving only his expensive sneakers and a little charred bone behind. Cassian's bio-crisis teams goes to investigate when the second such victim, Frank Wallace, is tied to a prominent pharmaceutical company. While Hailey attempts to infiltrate the company's deepest levels, Shiroma and Marcase go to the school to try to stop the bizarre disease from claiming the lives of other youngsters. The team soon learns that Melton Pharmaceuticals has developed a new antiviral drug and is testing it through a free clinic.

**5. "Night Flight"** Written by Carleton Eastlake; Directed by Jesus Salvador Trevino; airdate: October 1, 1996; *Guest Cast*: Richard Yniguez, Michael Harney, Heidi Noelle Lenhart, Michael Cavanaugh (Captain); Tom Jourden, Rosanna Huffman, Barbara Nickell, Christina Ma, Dom Magwili (Military Police); Lance August (Sgt. Robert W. Francis); Mike Terne (Second Skinhead); Donald Nardini (Flight Engineer); Jordan Marder (Duty Officer); Kristina Malota (Katie); Frank Farmer (Flight Surgeon); Grant Mathig (Biohazard Commander).

Shiroma, Marcase, and Hailey have just spent several weeks abroad in Southeast Asia searching for a suspected plague when they board a flight for home. En route, Mr. Rick McGee, traveling with his wife Arla, falls ill from an unknown disease which resembles hemorrhagic fever. When the plane attempts to land for immediate medical care, the third world government shuts down the airport and launches attack jets to prevent the plane's descent. With a five hour trip to Hawaii and the disease spreading via contact like wildfire, Marcase and Hailey must contend not only with frightened passengers who want to dump the sick into the sea, but also with a serious problem: Who will land the plane if the pilots die?

**6. "Lethal Injection"** Written by Coleman Luck and Caryl Gage Luck; Directed by Richard Compton; airdate: October 15, 1996; *Guest Cast*: Sherman Howard (Dr. Elton Greenleaf); Keith Szarabajka (Kinnick); Tim deZarn, Jim Holmes, Barbara Tarbuck (Dr. Boston); Wayne Pere, Dennis Christopher,

Kenny McCabe (Security Specialist); Lawrence McNeal III (Guard); Shae Popovich (Technician).

A secret informant named Jonas reveals to Dr. Cassian that a mass murderer and pop culture icon who died of lethal injection is actually alive. A secret government agency is conducting a bizarre experiment: they believe they have made contact with intelligent lifeforms in an afterlife dimension, and they are using convicts who “die” of lethal injection to bring back important messages from the other side. One such convict, Dr. Elton Greenleaf, comes back from the older dimension (which gave birth to our own) possessed by a malevolent spirit. Cassian’s bio-crisis team goes to work to investigate the Gethsemane Project and Marcase is forced to take an unwanted trip to the city of dead ... the dimension of pure evil.

**7. “Touch of the Dead”** Written by Robert Gilmer; Directed by Oscar L. Costo; airdate: October 29, 1996; *Guest Cast:* Dennis Boutsikaris (Stephen Rydell); Daphne Ashbrook (Rachel Roberson); Jennifer Sommerfield (Erica); Grace Zabriskie (Woman in Asylum); Constance Forslund (Woman on the Monitor); J.P. Hubbell (Bartender); Hervi Estrada (Man); Robert Zachary (Security Supervisor).

On his way home from a party, Cassian is cut by a woman who resembles his former lover, and infected with the deadly disease which killed her ten years ago and is believed to have destroyed Mayan civilization centuries earlier. Now Cassian has forty-eight hours to live, and his team has that long to find out who has infected him (as well as discover the antidote). The mysterious Rachel Roberson, Cassian’s former lover, may still be alive as a healer with supernatural powers, and the organization called New Dawn is planning the extermination of the human race, beginning with Cassian and Roberson. When things look grim for Cassian, Rachel appears at the lab with an unusual antidote, but the leader of New Dawn shows up as well.

**8. “Hall of the Serpent”** Written by Coleman Luck and Carel Gage Luck; Directed by Michael Lange; airdate: November 12, 1996; *Guest Cast:* Nicholas Lea (Phillip Patchett); Kimberly Kates (Rebecca Cassian); Jessica Cushman (Monica); Nicole Nieth (Kelly); Kevin Fry (O’Fallon); Alex Fernandez (Guard); Nick Kusenko.

Cassian’s niece, Rebecca, has disappeared into the compound of cult leader and mystical healer Phillip Patchett. Patchett believes that the ruins of the Greek island Delos can cure terminal illnesses and he has formed a quasi-religious group in Mexico which worships a “healing” serpent God. Cassian requests the team’s help in clearing up this “personal” matter, and it begins to investigate Padgett’s so-called psychic surgery. His cure for cancer consists of the placement of rocky temple ruins inside the human body ... a procedure which Marcase may be forced to endure when he takes an experimental CIA drug which mimics disease, and then infiltrates the cult.

**9. “Blood Covenant”** Written by Coleman Luck III; Story by Coleman Luck III and Kimberly A. Shriner; Directed by Oscar L. Costo; airdate: November 19, 1996; *Guest Cast:* Mark Lindsay Chapman (Henry LaFour); Marisa Coughlan (Chante LaFlour); Randy Oglesby, Kenneth Johnson, Diana Castle (Mrs. Kayge); Brad Koepenick (Dr. Tucker Welles); Bridget Hoffman (Nurse); Rick Cramer (SWAT Team Member); Richard Petes (SWAT Team Leader); Greg Eagles (Zairian); Gabriel Alexander, Lisa Anne Morrison (Secretary); Lynne Larsen (Michelle Lefour).

The United States is unexpectedly blackmailed by an anonymous terrorist: if 500 million dollars are not transferred to a Swiss bank account in forty-eight hours, Orlando will be devastated by the intentional release of malaria. The culprit in this extreme case of bioterrorism is a disenfranchised

scientist who lost his team, and wife, in Zaire when America did not support him. As people start to die in Orlando, Cassian's biocrisis team works to discover the method of contamination, and hypothesizes that the American Relief Blood Bank has been shipping out malaria-infected blood. The culprit's daughter, of all people, helps to set things right.

**10. "Faces in the Night"** Written by Carleton Eastlake; Directed by Scott Brazil; airdate: November 26, 1996; *Guest Cast:* Marc Poppel (Oliver Hamilton/Frank Stark); Alicia Coppola (Terry); Vincent Duvall (Detective); James M. McBride, Peter Allas, Edwina Moore (Nurse); Jean Luc Martin (Duty Officer Boeck).

Kimberly is kidnapped at a hospital by a psychopath called the "Werewolf Killer" who is in search of the "Perfect One." Cassian, Marcase, and Hailey search for Shiroma when the local authorities seem unhelpful, and determine that a serial killer who strikes during the full moon is responsible for their friend's abduction, as well as seven other murders in the last nine months. With a sample of the killer's blood, Cassian and the others use secret technology developed for the Human Genome Project to help generate a genetic "fingerprint" of the kidnapper. With only hours left before Kimberly is killed, the team's last hope of saving her rests with another woman the Werewolf Killer once attacked, but who does not wish to come forward.

**11. "Midnight of the Carrier"** Written by Carleton Eastlake; Directed by Janet Greek; airdate: January 7, 1997; *Guest Cast:* Tim O'Connor (William Helderma/Erhardt Boem); Tim Ryan (Robert Stennis); Tomas Arana, Alan Scarfe, S. Russell Werkman, Jordan Marder, Magda Haroud (Emma Helderma); Lorie Griffin (Receptionist); Craig Schoen (Young Helderma); Wolf Muser (Nazi Doctor); Timothy Dale Agee (Agent Mitchell); Van Quattro (RAD Team Member).

An old man is saddened by his wife's death, and then confesses to her Catholic priest that as a youth in Nazi Germany a mystical talisman was implanted inside his chest by Himmler. Marcase, Cassian, and the others help the old man, planning to remove the strange capsule from his torso. However, a shadowy government agent secretly allied to a white supremacist group also wants to possess the mysterious talisman/capsule, which contains two red gemstones. Marcase and Shiroma learn that the gems are part of an ancient occult weapon called "The Eyes of Odin" which can reestablish the power of the Third Reich.

*Note:* This is the final episode featuring Shiroma and Marcase.

**12. "Critical Mass"** Written by Carleton Eastlake and James G. Hirsch; Directed by Richard Compton; airdate: January 28, 1997; *Guest Cast:* Cindy Katz (Major Kay Harrier); Eugene Williams, Lance Guest, Christine Champion, Warren Sweeney, Henry Hayashi, Persia White, William Wellman, Jr., James Lesure, Will Schaub (SWAT Team Leader); Kris Iyer (Medical Examiner); Sally Hightower (TV reporter); Ned Lake (Second Officer); Wiley Pickett (Downed Man); Don Brunner II (Air Force Officer).

An unidentified bit of space debris strikes a warehouse and creates a huge fireball. Shiroma and Marcase have been reassigned to a project in Zimbabwe, leaving Cassian and Hailey to investigate matters with an arrogant new medico, Dr. Brian Taft. The problem is that exposure to the meteor seems to drive people insane as well as stimulate massive and accelerated tumor growth. Taft, Hailey, and Cassian follow the trail of insanity to a top secret government lab housing explosive detonators from "Operation Candlewick," even as the scientists stationed there begin to go ballistic.

**13. “Death Song”** Written by Robert Gilmer; Directed by Michael Miller; airdate: February 4, 1997; *Guest Cast:* Angela Teek (Tina Wright); Diane DiLascio (Dr. Patricia Billings); Michael Buchman Silver, Adrian Spaks, Jeffrey Anderson-Gunter, David McSwain (Young Man); Wendy Braun (Young Woman); Liz Mamana (Darlene); Scott Alan Cook (Jeter).

Taft, Hailey, and Cassian team with the beautiful Dr. Billings to investigate the sudden skeletal collapse of a young woman with a history of Hodgkin’s lymphoma. As an outbreak of this frightening, bone-shattering disease looms as a real possibility, Hailey falls for beautiful pop star Tina Wright on the verge of her fifty-city tour. Hailey defends her life from a secret assassin as Cassian and Taft trace the victims of the “disease” to a recently deceased doctor named Berlam. Things become difficult from there as Hailey discovers that Tina also received radiation therapy from Dr. Berlam, and may be the disease’s next victim.

**14. “The Last Endless Summer”** Written by James G. Hirsch; Directed by Stephen L. Posey; airdate: February 11, 1997; *Guest Cast:* Judith Hoag (Dr. Meredith Shrager); Andrew Kavavit, Nancy Everhard (Mrs. Cassian); Obba Babatunde, Todd Susman (Henry Newland); Rikki Dale, Duke Moosekian, Radmar Agana Jao (Technician); Caron Strong (Nurse); David Chisum (Mac); Dennis Howard (Clergyman); Trevor Jackson (Paramedic); Kristin Steese (Renee Cassian); Endre Hules (Sailor); Eddie Wilde (Killer); Bobbie Norman (Mrs. Bartholomew); Christine Moore (Tracy).

Near San Pedro, California, a Russian ship releases a microscopic organism into the water, polluting the shores of Laguna Beach. Surfers are soon falling deathly ill, infected by wormlike parasites which ravage their internal systems, so Cassian and his team investigate. Though Cassian is chafing under the authority of his new superior, Henry Newland, and mourning the end of his marriage, he still gets down to business and determines that the area is under siege from a microbial invasion. A brilliant twenty-two-year-old resident who is himself infected by the parasite helps to put the pieces of the puzzle together.

**15. “The Last Five Pounds Are the Hardest”** Written by Carleton Eastlake; Directed by Michael Miller; airdate: February 18, 1997; *Guest Cast:* Judith Hoag (Dr. Meredith Shrager); Thomas Kopache (Kaplinger); Carol Potter (Mrs. Mason); David Purdham, J. Madison Wright, Mark Bramhall, Michael Paul Chan, Randy Irwin, Kelly Rowan (Stacy); Kevin Westin (Jerry); William Jones (Mr. Purvis); Paul Messinger (Dr. Leeman); Michael H. Moss (Art Mason); Frantz Turner (Policeman).

An anorexic-looking teenaged girl hoping to become a ballerina is brought into the hospital when she experiences a terrible bout of hypothyroidism, the total slowing down of her metabolism. When more people start to suffer from the same symptoms all over the country, Taft is called in to assist Dr. Shrager at the university hospital. He traces the problem to a new diet drug on the market called Metabathin from Pharmatrex. Soon, Taft, Cassian, and Hailey realize that somebody has triggered the outbreak with the express purpose of destroying Metabathin’s financial future.

**16. “Elegy for a Dream”** Written by Michael Gleason; Directed by Nancy Malone; airdate: April 29, 1997; *Guest Cast:* Christine Healy, Ladd York, Julianne Christie, Seth Isler, Al Sapienza, Ted W. Henning, Dawn Lewis, Nick Spano (Bobby); Scott Hamm (Mark); Rocco Vienhage (Director); Victor Wilson (Coach Darryl Wilson); Kerian Jorgenson (Dana Whitman); Dawn Zeek (Tiffany); Ilia Vdokn (Janos); Jason Van (Sailor); Joe Rose (Customer).

In Chicago, Dr. Taft visits with his sister and his nephew, a college-bound athlete hoping for a football

scholarship. The family reunion is cut short when a rich man's daughter collapses on the dance floor in a local club, a victim of a flesh-eating virus. Soon the disease is spreading, and Taft's nephew becomes infected. Cassian, Taft, and Hailey realize that the common denominator in all the cases is a Yugoslavian tattoo parlor which is using contaminated tools and inks.

**17. "A Secret in the Neighborhood"** Written by Bart Baker; Directed by Michael Miller; airdate: May 6, 1997; *Guest Cast:* Lara Steinick (Dr. Bela); Nancy Everhard (Mrs. Cassian); Todd Susman (Henry Newland); Kristin Steese (Renee Cassian); David Cromwell, Larry Williams, Terence Knox (Major Reed); Robert Ayers (Dr. Vashon); Kirk Fox (Carny); Rick Cramer (Military Driver); Edward Rote (Corporal); Kevin Downes (Young Man); Terry Markwell (Gina); Sarah Carson (Suzette).

Cassian takes his daughter to Patriot Amusement Park, but once there he encounters a tourist who is struck down by a contaminated snow cone. Cassian investigates while Taft is still in town, and learns that the illness was caused by a deadly chemical agent. The illness is related to Desert Storm, and it is a weapon being used by a renegade military force which hopes to cleanse America. After another outbreak, Cassian and Hailey trace the deadly chemical weapon to a military base just seven miles from Cassian's family.

**18. "Wild Fire"** Written by David Kemper; Directed by Stephen L. Posey; airdate: May 13, 1997; *Guest Cast:* Shannon O'Hurley, Denzaleigh Abernathy, Walter Emanuel Jones, Diane Davis, Wes Charles, Jr., V.P. Oliver, Anne Betancourt (Head Nurse); Peter Suarez (Donnie Silkiss); Bjorn Johnson (Restaurant Owner); Vachik Mangassarian (Jeweler); Noelle Neal (Kelli Niles); Skip O'Brien (Foreman); Carleane Burke (Mrs. Hailey); Mark Deallesandro (Headwaiter); David Lea (Vagrant Man).

While in Chicago to see Dr. Taft accept an award, Cassian receives a "Code Red" alert to report to Michigan. With Hailey and Taft in tow, Cassian investigates an outbreak of cholera in Detroit with an incredibly fast rate of onset and a resultant, fatal, dehydration. Meanwhile, Hailey faces tragic memories about his youth in Detroit and must locate the only person who may be immune to the cholera: a young African-American boy who despises his abusive stepfather. As the cholera outbreak spreads rapidly, originating from a contaminated string of imported black pearls, Taft's analysis reveals that this mutant disease may be manmade.

**19. "On Wings of Angels"** Written by James G. Hirsch; Directed by Richard Compton; airdate: May 20, 1997; *Guest Cast:* John Lafayette (Dr. Quinton Bernard); Dwayne L. Barnes, Joe Cortese, John Prosky, Mongo Brownlee, Tommy Morgan Jr., Hellena Schmeid, Tracy Grant, Kristopher Logan, Jimmy Ray Jr., Michael Ryan Way (Starkey); D.K. Kell (Lt. Mays); Angel Vargas (Cain); Chariesse Lavelle (Lyneth); Jerry Rector (Guard).

A secret plot to make jailed prisoners act in a more docile fashion has the opposite effect and in fact stirs a fit of violence in one inmate. A secret drug is being injected into the prisoners' cigarettes, and it is causing severe growths and even skin rippage around the back of the skull. Two compromised prisoners and a jailed doctor seeking redemption escape from the prison and capture Taft, in hopes of making him cure their sick friend.

## *Millennium* (1996–1999)

### CRITICAL RECEPTION

“*Millennium* does look more like a movie than a TV show, but Henriksen is no Anthony Hopkins and Carter has a penchant for pretentious mumbo jumbo about the end of the world.”—Rick Marin, *Newsweek*, “Warning: The XXX Files,” September 16, 1996.

“Shrouded in fin-de-siècle doom and gloom, *Millennium* makes *Twin Peaks* look like a morning in *Romper Room*. Literate, well-acted and blessed with an irresistible hook, it’s the best new show of the season ... Henriksen is ... exceptionally appealing as Frank.”—Jeremy Gerard, *Variety*, October 21–27, 1996, page 212.

“maddeningly enigmatic crime series, which has grown more pretentious and less coherent with each new installment. What began in ’96 as a dank, depressing, yet authentically atmospheric serial-killer-of-the-week thriller turned a lot murkier last season when ex-FBI profiler Frank Black ... began battling his former allies in ... the secretive Millennium Group. This season ... Frank now looks as blank and confused as the audience.”—Mike Lipton, *People*, November 2, 1998.

“*Millennium* is carrying out a nifty feat: For all the signs that the end times are coming to the streets of Seattle, the true apocalypse appears to be taking place in Frank Black’s own tormented spirit. For him, a murder is never just a murder—pathology is part of a grotesque master plan. His mission of preventing his nightmares from becoming mass reality is cleverly tautological, a wide-open story line. ... Once again, he’s [Chris Carter] one step ahead of a trend.”—Alyssa Katz, *The Nation*: “*Millennium*,” November 25, 1996, page 35.

“*Millennium* tackles ... nothing less than the existence of evil in our midst.... There’s just enough bizarre reality to make *Millennium* the season’s most chilling drama.... Mr. Carter pushes all the right apocalyptic buttons.... The production values ... darkly mirror the text. Except for Frank’s new home, an oasis of bright colors, gloom predominates, usually against a backdrop of driving rain.”—John J. O’Connor, *The New York Times*: “The Evil That Lurks All Around,” October 25, 1996, page B16.

“*Millennium* surpassed itself in cultivating relationships between its principal cast ... *Millennium* has at least become a clear artistic success, making sense out of an often chaotic, disturbing world with consummate intelligence and powerful emotions.”—*X-Pose* #35, “Inner Demons,” June 1999, pages 49–51.

### FORMAT

Chris Carter’s less-popular follow-up to *The X-Files* is *Millennium*, a horror/crime series which features paranormal and supernatural overtones. It has drastically altered format each year it has remained on the air, but remained consistently intriguing throughout its three-year television sojourn. If *Silence of the Lambs* (1991) was a major source of inspiration for *The X-Files*, then the 1995 hit feature *Seven* might be seen as the direct antecedent to the less mainstream, but nonetheless intellectually challenging *Millennium*. Directed by David Fincher (*The Game* [1997], *Fight Club*

[1999]), *Seven* concerned two cops (Morgan Freeman and Brad Pitt) hot on the trail of a serial killer who murdered folks in gruesome ways which reflected how each victim had committed one of the seven deadly sins. Similarly, *Millennium's* first season involved the pursuit of high-concept serial killers who dispatched people in innovative and frequently gory ways. This fascination with psychos, the nastiest of nasty characters, may have been what left viewers feeling turned off and disenfranchised, and the central *Millennium* concept soon changed. Beginning with the first season story "Lamentation," a supernatural element was folded into the series, and "demons," "devils," and "angels" were frequently seen or alluded to.

A second inspiration for *Millennium* appeared to be the 1978 feature film *The Eyes of Laura Mars*, written by John Carpenter. Like Faye Dunaway's fashion photographer Laura Mars in that Irvin Kirschner-directed picture, Frank Black (Lance Henriksen), the protagonist in *Millennium*, had the uncanny ability to see what killers see. He was never called "psychic" on the show but Black was, in effect, psychic. Frank's visions would often take form as gory, bloody flashes of horrible things, or sometimes as enigmatic images which required deciphering ("Luminary," "Roosters").

Lastly, the series *Millennium* focused on the approach of the 21st century, and the fear that man would not survive the advent of the year 2000. As its name indicated, it was an end-of-the-world, millennialist imagining. Various episodes dealt with myths surrounding the end of the world in a variety of cultures and spheres, from the religious to the technological.

*Millennium's* first season followed ex-F.B.I. agent Frank Black and his family (wife Catherine and daughter Jordan) as they relocated to Seattle to escape the harrowing life in the bureau which had driven Black to a nervous breakdown. Frank's ability to "see" as the killers see, however, became useful to an organization of former law enforcement officials called "The Millennium Group," which has sworn to prevent the domination of evil as the millennium grows near. During the first season, Frank consulted for the Millennium Group and helped local law enforcement officials in Seattle track down a variety of the "high concept" serial killers much like the one seen in *Seven*. Fantasy elements were kept firmly in check, with Frank's psychic ability being the only exception. After about six or seven weeks of repetitive serial killer stories, *Millennium* emerged as a grim (even dire) series lacking variety. Not surprisingly, audiences abandoned the show in droves. Had they stayed around longer, they would have seen a humdinger of a series, as its story arc became more clear, and much more interesting.

The second season of *Millennium* saw massive format alterations. Frank grew close to Peter Watts (Terry O'Quinn) a Millennium Group member, as together they solved far more bizarre and even supernatural cases, and went on various missions (inside and outside America) to preserve ancient religious artifacts (like the crucifix of Christ, or the hand of St. Sebastian). Surprisingly, the Millennium Group, the heroic force of the first season, was exposed as a cult with ambiguous motivations in the second season! Worse, Catherine and Frank separated, leaving Black without the family and home he had sought to defend in the first season. Ratings for *Millennium* stayed low, and it was decided to end the series with the apocalyptic scenario long-predicted on the show. In "The Fourth Horseman" and "The Time Is Now," the Millennium Group released a deadly virus which spread across the world rapidly, killing off millions, including Catherine Black (Megan Gallagher). The second season ended with a new Black Plague ravaging America as a shattered Frank Black, his hair turned stark white, faced the end of human civilization. It was a kick-ass ending to a series which had always played with the concept of "the end."

Miraculously, *Millennium* was revived for a third season, and it was necessary to do some pretty heavy backtracking for the series to continue in the same “police procedural” vein. The outbreak of the Marburg Variant (described in the second season finale as having hit South America, China, and killing at least 500 people in Seattle) was rewritten to have been a local outbreak which claimed only seventy unlucky lives in all. An angry Frank Black, teamed with a novice agent named Emma Hollis (Klea Scott), returns to the F.B.I. and investigates the movements of the Millennium Group, now the series’ primary villain! Peter Watts, formerly characterized as a decent and honorable man, was also back ... as a shadowy agent of evil. The substance of the third year saw Frank and Peter clash, while Emma tried to learn everything she could about her mentor and the shadowy cult which he was once nearly a part of.

No matter which year is favored, *Millennium* has been an involving, well-made series from start to finish. The third season ended hastily with “Goodbye to All This,” a story which failed to bring all the elements of the show together. The show was canceled in late 1999. For all three years, it aired on Fox, on Friday nights at 10:00 P.M. For a brief time, its lead-in was the excellent *Brimstone*, but the ratings, sadly, remained low.

## HISTORY

In 1996, Fox Television had a bona fide hit on its hands with Chris Carter’s *The X-Files*. Carter was, rightly, being heralded as a creative genius, and as *X-Files* clones (*Strange Luck*, *Dark Skies*, *Profiler*, *Nowhere Man*, *The Burning Zone*, *Early Edition*, *Profiler*, and the like) began to proliferate across the tube like a deadly plague, the originator of the trend was called upon to supply a second genre series to Fox’s primetime schedule. Though still working loosely within the police procedural vein of *The X-Files*, Carter imagined a very dark series about one man’s quest to fight the violence he saw consuming American society on the eve of the 21st century. Carter’s new hero, Frank Black, was not an eager, young hothead seeking the “truth,” but a man cursed with a terrible “insight” who was trying to make positive use of that curse to protect his family. *Millennium* would not concern aliens, prehistoric beasties, or mythical monsters come to life, but the monsters found in the human race.

Though William Hurt was originally slated to play Frank Black in *Millennium*, the role went to Lance Henriksen, a talented movie star who had made a splash in a number of films, including *The Right Stuff* (1983), *The Terminator* (1984), *Aliens* (1986), *Pumpkinhead* (1988), *Alien<sup>3</sup>* (1992), and *The Quick and the Dead* (1995). Henriksen was an inspired choice to play Frank, a brooding, moody character as different from the sarcastic, handsome Mulder of *The X-Files* as could be imagined. Where Duchovny’s Mulder was a very outgoing, extroverted character despite the grief in his life, Frank Black was an introvert, someone who kept all of his pain inside, just beneath those tortured eyes. Eschewing the “partner” set-up of *The X-Files*, the supporting characters in *Millennium* were members of Frank’s immediate family, in particular his wife, Catherine (Megan Gallagher of *Nowhere Man* [1995-96]) and his precocious daughter Jordan (Brittany Tiplady). Frank was assisted in his investigations of unusual hate and homicide crimes by a cadre of middle-aged white men, including Seattle detectives Bob Bletcher (Bill Smitrovitch) and Gablehouse (Stephen James Lang), and member of the Millennium Group, the balding Peter Watts (Terry O’Quinn).

Chris Carter wrote, and David Nutter directed, a brilliant pilot for *Millennium*, one which poignantly captured the two sides of Frank Black’s life: both the evil and the good. Scored by Mark Snow, of *The X-Files*, the *Millennium* pilot was so well done that it could have been a feature film. Frank Spotnitz,



who would soon work on the series himself, recalls his reaction to the first viewing:

[the pilot] managed to be scary, original, intriguing and ... really true about the nature of life, which is that there are two worlds co-existing at the same time ... It's the Apollonian and the Dionysian views of the world, and that pilot so perfectly embodied ... that split and characterized Frank Black as a man caught between ... two worlds, who recognizes that you need to preserve that bright and sunny world to make life worth living, but you can't deny that dark undercurrent is always there ... it was incredibly powerful.<sup>1</sup>

Besides creating a true TV original in his protagonist, Frank Black, Chris Carter managed something else that was quite noteworthy. Although his formula for *The X-Files* was a combination of brilliant planning (specifically that the two worldviews of its main characters would clash in perpetual conflict) and fortunate happenstance (the chemistry between Anderson and Duchovny enlivened the show way beyond what was deemed imaginable), *Millennium* was built on a solid bedrock of exciting ideas and artistic flourishes. Foremost among these was one of the primary settings of the series: Frank Black's bright yellow house in a Seattle suburb. To Carter, that house, that example of what Spotnitz called the "bright, sunny world," was a crucial factor of the *Millennium* equation. It was designed as a pointed contrast to Frank's often grim work, and as a reminder to viewers *why* Frank worked so hard, and faced so much human ugliness. The world of the normal American family, of that great yellow house, was an important undercurrent of *Millennium* from its outset, as Carter described in an interview for *X-Pose*:

Frank has tried to carve out of the world a sanctuary, a very bright place. It's no mistake that he's painted his house yellow. This is the thing that he wants to protect over everything and it becomes the focus of the whole show: how will he deal with these things ... and act heroically, and at the same time keep his family in a world where they don't have to think about those very things, where they don't ... see the struggle that he goes through.<sup>2</sup>

How many other horror shows, indeed how many dramatic series in general, can lay claim to including, from the foundation up, so potent and artistic a symbol? Most TV series eschew symbolism all together because they appeal to the lowest common denominator, but Chris Carter proved with *Millennium* that *The X-Files* was no fluke. In some ways, *Millennium* was really a better-built mousetrap than his first series. The reviewers took notice of its high quality, and when *Millennium* began airing in the fall of 1996, it was hailed as one of the best, if not *the* best, series of the year.

Alas, insightful TV critics do not always get the last word in such matters, as Chris Carter quickly learned. His brilliant *Millennium* soon came under fire from a variety of bizarre special interest groups. Most of these complaints had nothing at all to do with the quality of the series, but rather the *nature* of *Millennium*. The first complaint came from the moral watchdogs, those despicable people who make a living telling other viewers what they should or should not watch. In this case, the censors felt that *Millennium* was too violent, too gory, in its approach to horror. Even before the series had aired two episodes, the pilot was being criticized as graphic, and worse, gratuitous, in its depiction of violent actions. Chris Carter quickly responded to the allegations:

It's not meant to be gratuitous ... I want to see someone having a responsible reaction to the violence I read about in my daily newspaper.<sup>3</sup>

In other words, Chris Carter had formulated a series in which a hero (Frank) took on all the evil of the

world, the evil that we have seen occur everywhere from Kosovo and East Timor to Jonesboro and Littleton. The moral watchdogs could see only the psychos, not Frank's response to the psychos, and so they misread *Millennium* as a bad influence. They wanted to silence its many ideas, because they did not understand those ideas. The debate over *Millennium's* inclusion of violent content went so far that even star Lance Henriksen weighed in with his opinion.

We're not living in a world where we understand the outcome of violence ... More offensive to me than the nature of *Millennium* is some show that ends precisely at 11:00 pm with everything all wrapped up in a nice cliché, everybody beaming and happy.<sup>4</sup>

Henriksen's remark on this matter was especially well considered. *Millennium* was only mirroring reality, not some twisted horror idea, and it was actually the *other* crap on TV, the *Touched by an Angels*, the *7th Heavens* that were more troublesome because they were ignoring elements of reality and offering a saccharine, Pollyanna-ish view of humanity. Predictably, so cogent and logical an argument fell on the deaf ears of the censors who wanted to whitewash television, and *Millennium* paid the price. Heard all the time was the criticism that it was too "dark."

The second assault on *Millennium* was a race and sex-oriented one. Critics in some circles criticized the show for not featuring women and minorities in substantive roles. Although it was true that Frank Black's inner circle was mostly "white-men only," this was the demographic which Carter's research had indicated would be involved with the solving of such violent crimes. Though it may not have appealed to women and minorities, Carter found that most law enforcement organizations (on which the Millennium Group was initially based) included primarily white, middle-aged men! Should a TV show be criticized for reflecting reality? *Millennium* was, unfortunately.

Actually, a whole series of assaults came *Millennium's* way early on. Many people in the industry had a vested interest in seeing Carter fail. Many times in Hollywood, people attain a certain measure of glee by watching a star, producer, director, or writer "fall from grace." Chris Carter, the mastermind of *The X-Files*, found himself in this position with *Millennium*. Having succeeded his first time out the chute, he was just ripe for a "tragic fall," whether his show was any good or not. This same kind of mentality has carried Kevin Williamson up to extreme fame, and back down to a level of critical loathing. Julia Roberts, Kathleen Turner, Joel Eszterhas, and Kevin Costner have also been victims of this strange fascination. They are built up as geniuses, and then, when their work does not live up to some insane measure, they are torn down as failures. Sensing weakness because of *Millennium's* low ratings, the vultures swooped in around Chris Carter.

Further criticisms of the show were aimed at Lance Henriksen, who some viewers apparently felt was too low key to function as a series lead, and the show's overall lack of humor. The myth was then perpetuated in the media that *Millennium* was the just the same old thing every week: serial killers, serial killers, serial killers. In fact, the rundown for the first eight weeks of *Millennium* looked like this: serial killer ("Pilot"), cult ("Gehenna"), serial killer ("Dead Letters"), serial killer ("Kingdom Come"), vigilante judge ("The Judge"), mad bomber ("522666"), serial killer ("Blood Relatives"), and child abuser ("The Well Worn Lock"). That dynamic represents a 50/50 split between serial killers and other criminals, not a slavish devotion to the "serial killer" motif. While 50 percent may still have been too much of a bad thing, one should be a little gracious when viewing a brand new series. As *Millennium* showed over time, it had much more on its mind than psychos. A fair assessment of the series could not be made after one or two episodes. *Millennium's* tapestry was much richer than a

single-viewing could register.

Despite an artistically successful (if low rated) first season, and a Golden Globe nomination for Lance Henriksen, all the brickbats had taken their toll. *Millennium* was grudgingly renewed for a second season, but it was to be a changed series. Chris Carter devoted more time to *The X-Files*, the crown jewel in his TV collection, and he hired two former *X-Files* writers, James Wong and Glen Morgan, to oversee production of *Millennium*. Right from the gate, this clever writing team (probably unintentionally) echoed much of the illegitimate criticism already leveled at *Millennium*, which was not a promising sign:

There was too much gore in the first season, and it was for shock's sake. There was no humor. Everybody wanted to know more about the Millennium Group. What was Frank's role with them? We needed to develop Frank. We had a good actress, Megan Gallagher, playing his wife, and what could we do with their relationship? Where can this go?<sup>5</sup>

Championing humor on *Millennium* did not seem a good idea, as the series was never designed to be funny or lighthearted. Still, Darin Morgan was soon on board the show as consulting producer. He was popular with *X-Files* fans for his serio-comic episodes of that series, including "Jose Chung's 'From Outer Space,'" "War of the Coprophages," and "Clyde Bruckman's Final Repose." For *Millennium*, Morgan contributed two like-minded stories, "Jose Chung's 'Doomsday Defense'" and "Somehow, Satan Got Behind Me." Like Wong and James Morgan, Darin Morgan also laid out what he saw as the problems of *Millennium*:

In *The X-Files*, Mulder and Scully were very delineated ... Mulder believes; Scully doesn't—and you could always fall back on that. During *Millennium*'s first season, you really don't know what Frank Black was doing. Glen and Jim tried to make it more clear the second season, but it was never very clear what he is or what he believes in.<sup>6</sup>

Despite these jibes, the second season of *Millennium* emerged as a very good one, equal to if not better than the first year. The supernatural aspects of the show were expanded, Darin Morgan's two comedies were excellent after all, and Morgan and Wong took a new tact by exploring the Millennium Group as a dangerous cult with ambiguous motivations.

Another controversial move, the separation of Frank and Catherine, added an additional layer of realism and immediacy to the drama, and Frank's house still had a place. That yellow house, that place to be protected, was now the object of Frank's grand quest. He had to fight evil, reunite his family, and find his way back to that house! Impressively, the second year of *Millennium* also explored Black's family history in poignant detail in the Halloween story "The Curse of Frank Black" and the Christmas tale, "Midnight of the Century," with guest Darren McGavin. The second season ended on a dynamite note, as the Millennium Group engineered its own deadly biological holocaust, and Catherine died a victim of the Marburg Variant Plague. With a stylish climax behind it, *Millennium* looked destined for syndication or reruns. Some nice icing on the cake was that the series' second year was nominated for two Emmys (outstanding sound editing for "Owls" and outstanding guest actor [Charles Nelson Reilly in "Jose Chung's 'Doomsday Defense'"]). Although it was an honor "just to be nominated," *Millennium* failed to win in either category.

By any rational mode of measurement, that should have been the end of *Millennium*. It was a low rated, unpopular series, and it had come to a natural end, bringing its end-of-the-world scenario to full

flower. Then the show was renewed, and the third season began. Again, much criticism was leveled at *Millennium*, and it was decided that the series would benefit from some more changes. James Morgan and Glen Wong left the series, and Chris Carter came back to do a significant revamp. Catherine (Megan Gallagher) was dead, so now Frank Black was a widower and his daughter Jordan was motherless. Also gone was that beautiful symbol, the yellow house. The Millennium Group had been “outed” as a cult, so now the nefarious organization would function in much the same way as the conspiracy did on the *X-Files*: as a recurring villain against which Frank would occasionally butt heads. Even Peter Watts became an ambiguous character, whose true loyalties were unknown, and all of the series action was shifted from Seattle to the Washington, D.C., area. The partner aspect of *The X-Files* had always proven popular, so the third season of *Millennium* saw Frank Black rejoin the F.B.I. and inherit a partner, the beautiful Emma Hollis. Their relationship would not be one of sexual chemistry, but of teacher and student. Despite the cosmetic changes, the stories were very much the same in nature, but if anything, even more enigmatic than before.

Despite all the reshuffling of ideas, *Millennium*, take three, was as good a show as its previous two incarnations. The evil Lucy Butler returned in “Antipas,” Y2K was the subject of “Teotwawki,” and “Skull and Bones” captured the terrifying nature of the Millennium Group in exquisite (and bloody) terms. A fourth year looked unlikely, so a voice-over by Lance Henriksen was inserted over the end of the third season finale, “Goodbye to All This,” putting the entire series in perspective. Still, many questions were left unanswered, and fans held out hope that *Millennium* would be renewed for a fourth season. When the ratings remained low, Fox finally pulled the plug. *Millennium* was canceled in the summer of 1999, and its last several episodes were not rerun even once in prime time. In its slot: *MAD TV* reruns, and Fox specials about good pets going bad.

In the fall of 1999, Chris Carter went on to produce *Harsh Realm*, and he brought Terry O’Quinn and Sarah-Jane Redmond with him. As for *Millennium*, the ongoing story of Frank Black and his daughter Jordan was brought back into the public eye during “Millennium,” a New Year’s Eve episode of *The X-Files* seventh season. Lance Henriksen and Brittany Tiplady guested on the wrap-up, and Frank Black partnered with Fox Mulder and Dana Scully. Reruns of *Millennium* air on the FX cable network at 1:00 A.M. weeknights.

## CRITICAL COMMENTARY

Despite its format shifts, *Millennium* is one of the most impressive horror TV series ever aired—*period*—because it focuses not on the overmined domains of vampires, aliens, or monsters, but on those shadowy, half-understood fears which affect the human heart and soul. Only sporadically in TV history has a TV series been so pointedly symbolic, so purposefully artful in its approach to terror, and thus *Millennium* is something quite special, and something quite memorable in the annals of terror TV. Forget the “serial-killer-of-the-week rap” that has plagued its video life, this series is far better, far smarter, than just about any program airing on the American networks today.

From frame one of episode one, *Millennium* announces its ambition to be much more than filler between fast food commercials. Each story, including the pilot, opens with a white-lettered quotation from a literary or religious source, and then serves to unveil a drama which echoes or contrasts with that opening selection. Yeats (“Pilot”), Dostoyevsky (“Dead Letters”), Herman Melville (“The Judge”), Jean-Paul Sartre (“522666”), Robert Louis Stevenson (“The Well Worn Lock”), Faust (“Loin Like a Hunting Cloth”), Cicero (“Walkabout”), George Eliot (“The Thin White Line”), Nietzsche (“Broken World”), William Rose Benet (“The Paper Dove”) and, inevitably, Shakespeare

(“Monster”), are just some of the greats *Millennium* has referenced and then mirrored.

These opening quotations are endlessly thought-provoking, and they also explain why this unusual series failed to connect with a majority of American audiences: it was simply pitched too high. On a Friday night, the boob tube gets turned on, and most viewers seek an escape, not a challenge. The wonderfully literate *Millennium* presented the latter, and paid for its high standards with low ratings. Yet, the opening quotations serve an invigorating purpose: they remind active viewers that there is a connection between past and present, a universality of the human condition. The situations Frank Black encounters are situations that Shakespeare or Cicero might have contemplated or written about. The opening quotes of *Millennium* connect the series to a literary and historical past. How’s that for an opening gambit on Friday night?

If *The X-Files* is examined as a happy accident, a *Kolchak* homage which succeeds because of Chris Carter’s writing talents and the magical chemistry between David Duchovny and Gillian Anderson, then it is illuminating to witness how *Millennium* was devised in artistic terms—from its opening quotations to its very interesting application of symbols and imagery (an application which catapults it to the same plateau of high quality as David Lynch’s *Twin Peaks*). That oft-mentioned yellow house, for instance, is a resonant, important symbol. Viewers naturally associate the color yellow with brightness, and with bright, happy things like the sun. Of course, the house represents protagonist Frank Black’s only bright place away from the darkness and horrors which he sees on the job and even inside his own tortured mind. Even good dramatic TV can mean, overall, nothing of significance (just look at *Seinfeld* or *NYPD Blue*), but great television successfully layers its meanings and subtexts one atop the other, often in visual terms. *Millennium* utilizes the symbol of the yellow house in a plethora of stimulating ways.

In the first season, the house is seen primarily as a sanctuary, a place of safety. In the second, it is a representation of paradise lost and the object of a heroic quest. In the third season, the house is but a memory, a sad one, but one which remains intact inside Frank’s head. Frank visits his former home in the episode “The Sound of Snow,” and it has been painted a pure white. Frank, ever perceptive, still sees into the past, still sees his yellow house, standing there on Ezekial Drive. Perhaps he still sees the yellow in the white because he is aware (as are we) that any chronicle of Frank Black will always involve that yellow house in some fashion. For it is not merely a shelter, not merely a comfortable abode, it is Frank’s ideal, the very place of joy and innocence that he seeks to protect and find inside himself every day. It is an externalization of the perfect place he cherishes in his mind as paradise or bliss.

One can argue that the yellow house of *Millennium* also represents an escape from the evils of the “outside” world, but contrarily, it is also the reason Frank faces the heart of human darkness every single day. By facing the black inside and out, Frank preserves the yellow, inside and out. The yellow house could also symbolize, on a more basic scale, small town America. Frank must save it from the encroaching evil all around. Thus the yellow house is not just beautiful architecture, it is a brilliant (and artistic) symbol because it immediately shares with viewers an insight into Frank’s personality, his interior architecture, if you will. We understand, we know immediately, why Frank does what he does. The yellow house is a visual cue-in to a very private character.

Thematically, *Millennium* triggers scares by challenging viewers with the specter of what may be the ultimate bogeyman: the end of the world. We all fear doomsday, that long-feared moment in the cycle

of time when human life is finally and completely snuffed out. This is a universal and powerful fear because most people really do suspect that the end *will* come one day. Dinosaurs preceded us here, and now they are extinct, long-forgotten bones buried in both the Earth and our collective subconscious. The Roman Empire came and went, a brief candle. The Native American culture which once existed in this land is now but a remnant too. Time passes, cultures die, and on some subconscious level all of humankind is aware of this changing of the guard. Will intelligent talking apes replace us? Smart cockroaches? Aliens? Who knows, but this universal fear of a total end has been part of our cultural and film history for a long time. *When Worlds Collide* (1951), *Armageddon* (1998), *Planet of the Apes* (1968), *Deep Impact* (1998), *Miracle Mile* (1989), and even the *Mad Max* saga are apocalyptic visions in which humankind must face its own inevitable finish. *Millennium* is rather unique not just because it plays on the universal human inquietude about doomsday, but because it so cogently and coherently enunciates any number of possible doomsdays, all encompassing the breadth of our existence on this planet. An astronomical end of the world, a tear in the fabric of time and space caused by the collision of two neutron stars, is described in “Roosters.”

Similarly, a once-in-a-millennium alignment of planets is believed to be the cause of an impending second great flood in “Force Majeure.” Religious apocalypses involving a new messiah (“Forcing the End”), the Anti-christ (“Marantha”), and other icons (“The Hand of St. Sebastian,” “Amnianesis”) of Christianity also formulate many of *Millennium*’s most provocative hours. Ethnic legends about doomsday inform a Native American exploration of the end in “A Single Blade of Grass,” and a biological finish to our human species is suggested by a deadly new plague in “The Fourth Horseman” and its continuation “The Time Is Now.” The Y2K computer bug, a technological apocalypse, is the context of “Teotwawki,” and “Jose Chung’s ‘*Doomsday Defense*’” has the audacity to suggest that a creative apocalypse is already in the offing. Written by Darin Morgan, this show implies that all that humans can look forward to for the next thousand years is the “same old crap.”

And all of those pesky serial killers? Though many viewers missed the interconnection across episodes and seasons, these societal outcasts and psychotics illustrate a very human sort-of apocalypse which has been triggered by the death of reason and the cessation of morality in the human animal here in the “end days” of the 20th-century. These psychos, which *Millennium* intimated were becoming more and more numerous as these “end days” approached, formed a modern metaphor for the fall of the Roman Empire. Insane historical figures like Caligula, and an overwhelming cultural decadence have often been blamed for Rome’s woes, and that is almost precisely how *Millennium* views late 20th century America: as a modern Rome crumbling from within because of its own decadence, its own degradation, its own internal evil. The feeling that the individual no longer matters in a mechanized, celebrity-worshipping state causes insanity in the killer of “Dead Letters.” Child abuse triggers a lifelong insanity in a young girl in “Darwin’s Eye.” One man’s exploitation of another human being generates the terror of “Blood Relatives,” and so on. *Millennium* looks at our society’s behavior, and judges it, frankly, insane.

Considering all of this unique thematic material, *Millennium* is a scary vision because it seems endlessly knowledgeable about its frightening premise. The end-of-the-world scenarios it graphically envisions sometimes seem quite believable, if not downright probable. The end of humanity is *Millennium*’s bailiwick, and it sticks to this terrifying domain with consistency and intelligence, despite format shifts. The serial killers, the angels and demons, the lost souls, the people who try to control the future—these are all part of *Millennium*’s meditation about humankind and what end our species might cause (by accident, even).

It is only on a close viewing of *Millennium*, however, that one can see that there is also a very optimistic side to the series. If that yellow house is an important symbol, as is the universal threat of the “end days,” of the apocalypse we let happen, then *Millennium* features one other critical symbol in its framework as well: the child. Episode after episode of *Millennium* focuses on children, and youth in general, surely because our offspring represent what the future *could* be. In our children, in the next generation, we see hope and fear, and *Millennium* feels the same way. In one of the best hours written for any television show, hands down, *Millennium* explores a very real evil of modern American society: the way in which our culture encourages children to be “ordinary.” The episode referred to is “A Room with No View,” and it concerns a demonic force (Lucy Butler) who captures “special” youngsters. These abducted teenagers are all voted “most likely to succeed,” and they are all well loved by their classmates and adults. Their grades are not the greatest, and they may not be the smartest kids around, but they represent the future because there is something almost intangibly special, something attractive and magnetic about each and every one of them. They all have spirit. These are the faces who will grow up to become our new leaders. In “A Room with No View,” our future leaders are captured and tortured until they succumb to the urge to become ordinary, despicable, invisible. In this case, *Millennium* sees an apocalypse not in some outside force like an asteroid or failing computer systems, but in our inability to inspire and support the stars of the next generation.

In “Goodbye to All This,” the final episode of *Millennium*, little Jordan Black says to her father: “we’re all shepherds.” This is a particularly beautiful moment, and one that echoes an earlier show (“Midnight of the Century”) in which Jordan actually portrayed a shepherd in the school Christmas pageant. By using the word “shepherd,” however, Jordan refers not only to a religious form of overseeing, but to a very general, very human, need to preserve our future. In a sense, all human beings are shepherds for the future. Our future (represented by the children), must be protected, or humankind will not exist anymore. Accordingly, *Millennium* often puts Frank Black in the role of shepherd, of protector, guarding the innocent and young from terrors of all varieties. He cloaks the psychic oracle children in “Exegesis”/“The Innocents” from the megalomaniacal Millennium Group. He rescues the special children in “A Room with No View” from a fate in which they succumb to the ordinariness of life. He zealously guards young day-care children from an evil wolf-in-sheep’s clothing in “Monster,” and so forth. Naturally, Frank’s role as protector of innocence, of the future, is also expressed in his relationship with his own daughter. He saves Jordan from the hands of death personified in “Borrowed Time,” and from a strange evil in “Saturn Dreaming of Mercury.” Since *Millennium* is about protecting our future, several episodes of *Millennium* revolve around the shepherd’s (Frank’s) job to save the young of our flock (the children).

*Millennium* is a TV series which is obsessed about the manner in which we treat our children, our very future, and thus the series has a consistent thrust through its three-year run, despite the sometimes irritating format changes. “Luminary” is another remarkable installment which sends Frank off in search of another lost youngster, this time a college-age boy, barely a man, who wishes to let go of all his ties to modern life and rediscover nature. The boy gives up his belongings, shedding the materialism of modern America, and finds peace in wild Alaska. The story is one of pure beauty, and optimism. Even after being rescued by Frank, the boy returns to the wilderness to chart his own path, to find his own future, free of society’s impediments. If our future is made up of thinkers, of individuals like the ones seen in “Luminary” or “A Room with No View,” then there will be no apocalypse of the spirit. The future is ours to make, and *Millennium* shows us a man who fights every day to preserve the future from those who would control or destroy it.

Other relevant themes also come to the forefront of many *Millennium* stories. “Wide Open” and “Weeds” tell the audience that horror can wiggle in *anywhere*, even inside our very own homes. The former (“Wide Open”) is about a killer who finds ways to circumnavigate modern home security systems and then butchers families *in toto*, while “Weeds” concerns a serial killer operating inside a restrictive gated community who kills to expose the many sins of the rich, yuppie suburbanites. In both cases, sacred barriers are tread upon, and a feeling of uneasiness is generated. The neighborhood and the home, two honored locations of safety in modern American society, are violated in brutal fashion, and *Millennium* warns us to be ever vigilant in what we perceive to be “security.” Our homes are our castles, but what danger lurks in the basement? In typically thoughtful fashion, *Millennium* also reveals that the so-called castle can be compromised from within, by dark forces ruminating inside the family unit. Fathers abuse children (the future), in “Darwin’s Eye” and “The Well Worn Lock,” and a Medea-like mother slaughters her children in “Covenant.”

Other episodes concern deep, human fears: the abduction of loved ones (“Sacrament,” “The Beginning and the End”), the loss of sanity and memory (“Walkabout”), sexual dysfunction (“Loin Like a Hunting Flame”), and the lack of order in our world (“Darwin’s Eye”), and so forth. Accordingly, *Millennium*’s imagery quite powerfully expresses these fears in visual terms. An evil, strangely distorted clown invades Jordan’s dreams in “Dead Letters,” and the malevolence from this haunting being almost oozes off the television screen. In the pilot, the serial killer sews up the faces of his victims, leaving them looking like the walking dead. Again, horror is palpable.

If one has doubts about *Millennium*’s impeccable horror credentials, one need only watch two specific episodes to be convinced of its curriculum vitae. “The Fourth Horseman” follows up on “Weeds” and “Wide Open” by shattering another place of safety: the family hearth. In this horrifying story, a typical suburban family sits down to enjoy a Mother’s Day meal together. Chicken is cooking on the grill in the backyard, the ever-present television is broadcasting a sporting event in the background, and the typical American family is together, united, bantering in a nice, human manner. This scene turns sour suddenly when the family, sitting together around the dinner table, consumes contaminated chicken. The mother becomes sick first, and blood starts to pour from her neck ... she is literally *sweating* blood. Then, lesions begin to form on the rest of the family, and they cough and bleed out in a matter of terrifying seconds. In one especially disgusting shot, a family member reaches for the telephone to dial 911, but as a finger hits the dial, blood explodes forth from the digit and splatters the device. This is a thoroughly disgusting, thoroughly disturbing scene, because it takes place somewhere that should be sacrosanct, the heart of family life. Instead, *Millennium* shows, in gut-wrenching visual fashion, how the end might come suddenly and unexpectedly for the typical American family. Disease could strike without warning, without preamble. It could take our loved ones from us in a heartbeat. This episode was written by Glen Morgan and James Wong, the same team who penned “Home” for *The X-Files*, and it is fair to state that this team understands (almost too well) how to build disturbing scenes which reach down into the core of our fearful hearts and twist, twist, twist with surgical precision.

“Walkabout,” by Chip Johannesen and Tim Tankosic, is another example of *Millennium*’s horror dexterity. The episode opens with a long, slow tracking shot through what seems to be an empty medical practice, like one that would be found in Anytown, U.S.A. The gliding camera recedes gracefully down a narrow hallway until the sounds of screaming are heard on the sound track. Suddenly, the camera descends, on cue, right into a view of total, stark, madness. Behind a transparent, glass door, a mob of diverse-looking people are screaming in what can only be described



as a hysterical, insane state. One man presses on his own eyeballs until they squirt, bleeding profusely. Then, in the midst of this utter craziness, the camera lands unexpectedly on ... Frank Black. He too is insane, pounding on the glass door to get out! After that brief look at Frank amidst total hell, the episode fades out to the main credits, and incredible chills are generated. As in “The Fourth Horseman” or “Weeds,” *Millennium* is playing with audience expectations in “Walkabout.” By this point in the series, Frank is the audience’s rock. He is the man who ends the madness, yet in the first sequence of “Walkabout” he is lost ... a victim of the madness consuming others. That surprising shot of Frank amidst the insanity is enough to give any viewer pause, and it is a brilliant hook on which to hinge an episode. For if Frank cannot stop the terror, who can?

As in the section of this text reviewing *The X-Files*, it would be easy to write at length about the concepts and conceits which drive *Millennium*. There is so much to analyze, including the manner the series cleverly manages to insert viewers into the skewed minds of madmen, but alas, there are other series to contemplate. Suffice it to say that *Millennium* is far better than the treatment it received from American audiences. It is an unforgettable excursion into horror, and a second creative act of brilliance from Chris Carter. If *Harsh Realm* is as sterling as *Millennium* and *The X-Files*, Carter will have managed to outdo even the great Rod Serling, and provided TV audiences with three masterpieces of terror.

For those who gave up on *Millennium* early and never looked back, please—seek it out now in reruns. Commit to viewing it from start to finish. Such an undertaking will not prove a waste, and on the contrary, will leave one with a bold and invigorating universe of horror to contemplate.

## CAST AND CREDITS

*Cast:* Lance Henriksen (Frank Black); **Seasons 1 and 2:** Megan Gallagher (Catherine Black. **Season 3:** Klea Scott (Special Agent Emma Hollis).

*Credits:* *Created by:* Chris Carter. *Music:* Mark Snow. *Editor (various episodes):* Peter B. Ellis, George R. Potter, Stephen Mark, Jim Thomson. *Production Designer:* Mark Freeborn. *Directors of Photography (various episodes):* Barry Donlevy, Robert McLachlan, Peter Wunstori. *Associate Producer:* Jon-Michael Preece. *Consulting Producers:* Chip Johannesen, Darin Morgan. *Co-Producer:* Robert Moresco, Paul Rabwin. *Producer:* Thomas J. Wright. *Co-Executive Producers:* Ken Horton, John Peter Kousakis. *Executive Producers:* Chris Carter, James Wong, Glen Morgan. *Associate Producer:* Julie Herlocker. *Executive Story Editor:* Michael R. Perry. *Casting:* Nan Dutton, Coreen Mayes, Randy Stone. *Associate Producer/Production Manager:* Kathy Gilroy-Sereda. *First Assistant Director:* Jack Hardy. *Second Assistant Director:* Roger Russell. *Set Decorator:* Mark Lane. *Art Decorator:* Sandi Tanaka. *Construction Coordinator:* Mike Rennison. *Script Supervisor:* Christine Lalande. *Location Manager:* Monty Bannister. *Hair Stylist:* Gina Sherritt. *Makeup:* Carolyn Stewart. *Special Effects Makeup:* Lindala Makeup Effects, Inc. *Costume Designer:* Diane Widas. *Head Painter:* Jenny Seinen. *Second Unit Director of Photography:* Barry Donlevy. *Sound Mix:* Ruth Huddleston. *Camera Operator:* Trig Singer. *Gaffer:* John Scott. *Key Grip:* R.K. Hill. *Property Master:* Kimberly Regent. *Special Effects Coordinator:* Bob Comer. *Stunt Coordinator:* Lou Bollo. *Transportation Coordinator:* James Perenseff. *Production Coordinator:* Clark Candy. *Extras Casting:* Lisa Ratke. *Assistant to Chris Carter:* Joanne Service, Mary Astadourian. *Production Associate:* Jennifer Metcalf, Clear Hadden. *Casting Associate (Vancouver):* Heike Brandstatter. *Postproduction Supervisor:* Denise Pleune. *Postproduction Sound:* West Productions, Inc. *Supervising Sound Editor:* Mark Ridgely Crookston. *Rerecording Mixers:* Nello Torri, Peter R. Kelsey, Kurt Kassuke. *Scoring*

*Mixer:* Larold Rebhan. *Music Editor:* Jeff Charbonneau. *Assistant Editor:* Robert Hudson. *On-Line Editor:* Rob Williams. *DaVinci Colorist:* Philip Azenzen. *Visual Effects:* Area 51. *Visual Effects Supervision:* Glenn Campbell. *Visual Effects Producer:* Tim McHugh. *Main Title Sequence:* Ramsey McDaniel/Storm Media. *Processing:* Gastown Post. *Electronic Assembly:* Encore Video. *Cameras and Lenses:* Clairmont Camera. *Vehicles Provided by:* Chrysler. *Filmed on Location in:* British Columbia. A Ten Thirteen Production.

## EPISODE GUIDE

### • *First Season (1996–1997)*

**1. “Pilot”** Written by Chris Carter; Directed by David Nutter; airdate: October 25, 1996; *Guest Cast:* Bill Smitrovitch (Bob Fletcher); Terry O’Quinn (Peter Watts); Brittany Tiplady (Jordan Black); Stephen J. Lang (Detective Gablehouse); Don MacKay (Jeff Meredith); Mike Puttonen (Pathologist); Jared Blancard (Young Man at Ruby Tip); Paul Dillon, Stephen E. Miller, Kate Luyben, April Telek.

Frank Black, his wife Catherine, and daughter Jordan move into their new yellow house in suburban Seattle. A former FBI agent recovering from a nervous breakdown, Frank is now profiling criminals as well as consulting for a mysterious organization called the Millennium Group. His first job involves the murder of a peep-show stripper by an unknown deviant, a poetry-spouting Frenchman. Frank tracks the killer, hoping to catch him before he strikes again ... but the police place little stock in Frank’s seemingly psychic ability to see what the killer sees.

**2. “Gehenna”** Written by Chris Carter; Directed by David Nutter; airdate: November 1, 1996; *Guest Cast:* Terry O’Quinn (Peter Watts); Brittany Tiplady (Jordan Black); Bill Smitrovitch (Bletcher); Robin Gammell (Mike Atkins); Don MacKay (Jack Meredith); George Josef (Mr. Bolow); Stephen Holmes; Chris Bradford (Driver); Henry Watson (Detective); Don McWilliams (Park Guy).

The Group brings Frank out to San Francisco to investigate the discovery of a human ear amidst a vast ash pile. Police work indicates that there are seven adult bodies in the thirty-nine pounds of ash, and Frank suspects that a strange cult which is utilizing a crematorium furnace may be responsible. An interrogation of one of the brainwashed cult members reveals an organization called “Gehenna” which is planning to control the coming (in 1998) apocalypse with everything from fear tactics to biological weaponry. A friend of Frank’s gets too close a look at the cult’s standard operating procedure when he is locked inside an industrial size microwave oven.

**3. “Dead Letters”** Written by James Wong and Glen Morgan; Directed by Thomas J. Wright; airdate: November 8, 1996; *Guest Cast:* Brittany Tiplady (Jordan Black); James Morrison (Jim Horn); Chris Ellis, Ron Halder, Garvin Cross (Patient); Anthony Harrison (Detective Jenkins); Lisa Vultaggio (Janice Sterling); Rob Morton (Lewis); Maria Louis Figura (Cindy Horn); Cooper Olson (T.C. Horn); Michelle Hart (Marjorie Holden); Fulvio Cecere (Security Guard); Andrew Laursen (Clown); Allison Warren (Officer Sarah Stevens); Ken Shimizu (C.S.T. Member).

Little Jordan is plagued by nightmares of a demonic clown as Frank investigates a serial killer in Portland whom the Millennium Group is unwilling to profile as of yet. Frank teams with the explosive detective Horn, a man distracted from the job by marital difficulties and his own temper. Frank discovers that the killer has left behind a message on the dead woman’s hair follicles: “hair today, gone tomorrow.” He realizes he is dealing with a very clever perpetrator with a knack for precision

and a need for adulation. Frank decides it is time to bait the obsessive killer by reporting to the press that his message to the police was misspelled, and that he is of “lower intelligence.”

**4. “Kingdom Come”** Written by Jorge Zamacona; Directed by Winrich Kolbe; airdate: November 15, 1996; *Guest Cast:* Michael Zelnicker (Galen); Lindsay Crouse (Cohen); Laurie Murdoch (Father Schultz); Arnie Walters (Father Brown); Terence Kelly (Detective Brown); Tom McBeath (Detective Romero); Alan Lehros (Jonathan); Ed Harrington (Marcus Crane); Wanda Wilkinson (Sister); Peter Haworth (Reverend Jack Harned); Brad Wattum (Reverend); Ralph J. Alderman (Motel Manager).

Frank and an old friend and colleague, the beautiful Ardis Cohen, work overtime to stop a serial killer who is targeting men of the cloth. Frank’s visions lead him to an understanding of this religious fanatic, and he attempts to talk the killer down during a dangerous hostage situation inside a church.

**5. “The Judge”** Written by Ted Mann; Directed by Randy Zisk; airdate: November 22, 1996; *Guest Cast:* Brittany Tiplady (Jordan Black); Bill Smitrovitch (Bletch); Marshall Bell (The Judge); John Hawkes (Mr. Bardale); Chris Ellis, Stephen James Lang (Detective Gablehouse); Brian Markinson, C.C.H. Pounder (Cheryl Adams); Michael Puttonen (Pathologist Massey); David Fredericks (Jonathan Mellen); Kirsten Williamson (Mail Room Worker); J.R. Bourne (Carl Nearman); Donna White (Anne Tisman); Eva DeViveiros (Ass’t D.A. Aquila); Kate Robbins (Marilyn); Beverly Elliot (Terry); Gabe Khouth (Parcel Service Employee).

A killer strikes outside the Lucky Pins Bowling Alley in Seattle, and then overnights the victim’s severed tongue to a seemingly random target, a widow. Bletch brings Frank in on the case after revealing that this type of “delivery” has occurred several times before in the last four years. The killings are the work of a lunatic who is working under the express direction of a man called “the Judge,” a wacko who believes he is dispensing justice to people who have escaped the legal system. When “the Judge” is apprehended and then released for lack of evidence, he offers Frank a job in which he will also be able to dispense absolute justice.

**6. “522666”** Written by James Wong and Glen Morgan; Directed by David Nutter; airdate: November 29, 1996; *Guest Cast:* Terry O’Quinn (Peter Watts); Brittany Tiplady (Jordan Black); Sam Anderson, Robert Lewis, Joe Chrest, Hiro Kanagawa (Agent Yung); William McDonald (Agent); Roger Barnes (Agent Smith); Deryl Hayes (Officer Mark Stanton).

A bar in Washington, D.C., frequented by British diplomats is destroyed in a bombing, and the Group flies Frank to the nation’s capital to investigate. A code typed in on a telephone before the explosion, 522666, spells “kaboom,” and Frank realizes he is dealing with one psychopath, not a foreign terrorist organization. Frank soon develops a “relationship” with the bomber through phone conversations and learns that the bomber considers himself a star, an artist whose palette is glass, blood, and fire. When the next bomb goes off, the bomber turns the tables by rescuing Frank and becoming a hero ... a star.

**7. “Blood Relatives”** Written by Chip Johannesen; Directed by James Charleston; airdate: December 6, 1996; *Guest Cast:* Terry O’Quinn (Peter Watts); Brittany Tiplady (Jordan Black); Bill Smitrovitch (Bletch); Stephen James Long (Gablehouse); John Fleck, Sean Six, Brian Markinson, Lynda Boyd, Nicole Parker (Green Cort); Diana Stevan (Mrs. Cort); Bob Morrisey (Mr. Cort); Deanna Milligan (Tina).

Following the wake of her deceased son, a grieving mother is pulled into his open grave by a psycho

and then brutally stabbed to death. While Catherine counsels the family in her capacity with Victim Services, Frank looks into the killing and determines that the murder was not about the dead woman, but about her dead, college-age son, and the grieving process. Frank also determines that the suspect is a funeral junkie who shows up at services to participate in the mourning, steal a souvenir or two, and depart, but now he seems to have crossed into a murderous rage. Frank traces the suspected killer to a refuge in a junkyard while Catherine attempts to make contact with the suspect's biological mother, who abandoned him years earlier as a strung-out teenager.

**8. “The Well Worn Lock”** Written by Chris Carter; Directed by Ralph Hemecker; airdate: December 20, 1996; *Guest Cast:* Paul Dooley (Joe Bangs); Michelle Joyner (Connie Bangs); Bill Smitrovitch (Bob Fletcher); J. Douglas Stewart (Larry Bangs); Shaina Tianne Unger (Sara Bangs); Campbell Lane (Joe Bangs' Attorney); Jim Fletcher (Bailiff); Steve Gatway (Judge); Christine Dunford, Lenore Zann, Sheila Moore.

In her capacity as a clinical social worker, Catherine assists a young woman who has been molested by her father, a prominent member of the chamber of commerce, for twenty plus years. Catherine discovers that the molestations occurred not just with one daughter, but all three. Political pressure mounts against Catherine for pursuing this case, and soon the misbehaving father vanishes with his youngest daughter in tow. Frank uses his gift to help end the terror, but will he be too late?

**9. “Wide Open”** Written by Charles D. Holland; Directed by James Charleston; airdate: January 3, 1997; *Guest Cast:* Brittany Tiplady (Jordan Black); Bill Smitrovitch (Bletch); Glynn Turman, Stephen James Lang (Gablehouse); Pablo Coffey, Nevada Ash (Patricia Highsmith); Eileen Kenney (Beverly Bunn); Sandra Ferens (Mary Kay Highsmith); David Neale (John Highsmith); Roger R. Cross (Officer Shaw).

A couple with a house for sale return home after an open house only to be bludgeoned to death by an intruder with an antique axe. Their young daughter survives this trauma in a vent, and Frank discovers her on the scene, though she is unable to help the police or Frank learn about the bloody crime she witnessed. At his home, the killer watches a video recording of the brutal crime and then mails it to the realtor who conducted the open house. When Bletch gets nowhere on the case, he considers showing the little girl the video of her parents' death, but Frank realizes that such a viewing is exactly what the killer desires: for little Patricia to relive the terror she has already experienced.

**10. “The Wild and the Innocent”** Written by Jorge Zamacona; Directed by Thomas J. Wright; airdate: January 10, 1997; *Guest Cast:* Terry O'Quinn (Peter Watts); Brittany Tiplady (Jordan Black); Heather McComb (Maddie Haskel); Jeffrey Donovan, John Pyper-Ferguson, Michael Hogan, Jim Gallanders (Missouri State Trooper); Steve Makaj (Arkansas Trooper Flanagan); John Tierney (Preacher); Renee Michelle (Adeline Travis); Jim Swansburg (Sam Travis).

Frank and Peter Watts head to Joplin, Mississippi, to track a fugitive murderer who Frank previously caught in 1992 (while he was still in the F.B.I.). Little does Frank realize that his dangerous perp has already been captured ... by his own victimized daughter and a volatile, gun-toting boyfriend. This duo heads to Arkansas searching for a child named Angel. Frank must stop them before they can harm Angel's adopted parents.

**11. “Weeds”** Written by Frank Spotnitz; Directed by Michael Pattinson; airdate: January 24, 1997; *Guest Cast:* Ryan Cutrona, Michael Tomlinson, Josh Clark, Terry David Mulligan, Brian Taylor,

C.C.H. Pounder (Cheryl Andrews); Don MacKay (Jack Meredith); Joy Rinaldi (Linda Comstock); Paul Batten (Priest); Andrew Johnston (County Coroner); Fred Henderson (Lawyer); Karin Konoval (Woman).

An upper-class, gated housing community in Pierce County, Washington, is terrorized by a lunatic who subdues his victims with a cattleprod, forces them to drink his own blood, and then kills them by amputating their hands. Frank consults on the case for the Group as more victims are taken and then returned, mutilated. One night, the killer follows Frank home and leaves behind a message: a paint swatch and the number 528. While Frank tries to decipher the meaning of the clues, he realizes that the killer knows the secrets of his well-to-do neighbors and is visiting the sins of the fathers upon the children.

**12. “Loin Like a Hunting Flame”** Written by Ted Mann; Directed by David Nutter; airdate: January 31, 1997; *Guest Cast:* Terry O’Quinn (Peter Watts); William Lucking (detective); Hrothgar Mathews (Art Nesbitt); Harriet Sansom Harris (Maureen); Barbara Howard (Karen); Malcolm Stewart (Vic); Doug Abrahams (Detective Kent); Barry Greene (Mark); Michael Buie (Randy); Derek Hamilton (New Mel); Natassia Malthe (New Leslie); Peg Christopherson (Sylvie); Crystal Cass (New Anne); Fawnia L. Mondey (Lauri).

In Boulder, Colorado, two adults in their 20s are found dead in a pose reminiscent of the Garden of Eden, right down to an apple with two bites taken out of it. Frank looks in on the case for the Group and determines that a repressed man who wants sex to be “innocent” and uninhibited is the culprit. Soon, he kills two swingers and displays their bodies on a bench, leading Frank to believe that the killer cannot allow his victims to live outside the world of his fantasies. The killer, a pharmacist, continues to abduct people as part of his quest to consummate, for the first time, his sexual relationship with his wife of eighteen years.

**13. “Force Majeure”** Written by Chip Johannesen; Directed by Winrich Kolbe; airdate February 7, 1997; *Guest Cast:* Terry O’Quinn (Peter Watts); Brittany Tiplady (Jordan Black); Brad Dourif (Dennis Hoffman); Morgan Woodward (Noah); C.C.H. Pounder (Cheryl Andrew); Mitch Kosterman (Lieutenant); Sarah Strange (Maura); Kristi Angus (Lauren/Carlin); Peter Manlon (Manager); Cindy Girling (Myra); Phillip Mitchell (Uniform #1); Merrilyn Gann (Carlin’s Mother); Timothy Webber.

During a freak snow storm, a college student immolates herself in what seems a ritualistic act. Catherine comforts her grieving (adopted) parents and is assisted by a mysterious man named Dennis Hoffman who claims that he works with Frank. Since Frank has no knowledge of any co-worker named Dennis, he enlists Peter Watts to help discover the truth about this man and the bizarre death. The mysterious Dennis Hoffman is a strange wanna-be profiler who believes that seven planets will align on May 5, 2000, causing extreme gravitational pressure on Earth and bringing about the end of the world through a massive flood.

**14. “The Thin White Line”** Written by Glen Morgan and James Wong; Directed by Thomas J. Wright; airdate: February 14, 1997; *Guest Cast:* Bill Smitrovitch (Bletch); Jeremy Roberts (Richard Allan Hanz); Scott Heindl (Jacob Tyler); Ken Tremblett (Agent Riley); Allan Harvey (Agent Johnson); Mark Holden (Agent Clark); Nancy Sivak (Anne Rothenburg); Larry Musser (Warden); Tom Heaton (Store Clerk).

When a stabbing victim is carried into the hospital, Frank recalls an incident from his days in the FBI,

when he was stabbed in the hand by a psycho. The killer strikes again, killing a grocer, and Frank realizes that a monster from twenty years ago is back ... killing in pairs and leaving behind calling cards. Frank's old foe, however, is actually serving seven consecutive life sentences in a maximum security penitentiary, and his work is being carried on by his former cell-mate, whom Frank calls the "living reincarnation" of the original terror. To stop the copycat, Frank must face his fears and interview Richard Allan Hanz, the man who scarred him two decades ago.

**15. "Sacrament"** Written by Frank Spotnitz, Directed by Michael Watkins; airdate: February 21, 1997; *Guest Cast:* Terry O'Quinn (Peter Watts); Brittany Tiplady (Jordan); Stephen James Lang (Gablehouse); Bill Smitrovitch (Bletch); Philip Anglim (Tom Black); Dylan Haggerty (Richard Greene); Brian Markinson (Cop); Lorena Gale (Dr. Patricia Moss); Daphne Goldrick (Green's Mother); French Tickner (Store Clerk); Ken Roberts (Green's Father); Liz Bryson (Helen).

At his nephew's baptism, Frank is on the scene when his brother's wife, Helen, is abducted. Bletch asks Frank *not* to get involved in the investigation, or to allow the Millennium Group to get involved, but Frank is unable to remain on the sidelines while his family suffers. With Peter Watts' unofficial help, Frank finds a suspect, Richard Greene, a sexual sadist and a mental patient formerly incarcerated at the Glen Rosa Home for the Criminally Insane. Frank's brother, Tom, snaps and confronts the killer at gunpoint, even as Frank learns that Greene is a satanist who has declared loyalty to Lucifer for all eternity.

**16. "Covenant"** Written by Robert J. Moresco; Directed by Roderick J. Priddy; airdate: March 21, 1997; *Guest Cast:* Brittany Tiplady (Jordan Black); John Finn (William Garry); Michael O'Neill, Sarah Koskoff (Didi Higgins); Jay Underwood, Steve Bacic, Don MacKay (Jack Meredith); Nicole Oliver (Dr. Alice Steele); Tyler Thompson (William Garry, Jr.); George Gordon (Judge Francis Maher); Karen Elizabeth Austin (Mrs. Anderson); David Abbott (Mr. Anderson); Norman Armour (Medical Examiner); Noah Heney (Charles Horvath).

A town sheriff in Ogden, Utah, is arrested for the murder of his wife, two boys, and his little girl with a skew chisel. Six months later, Frank is called in as an expert witness on cold-blooded killers to assure that William Garry is given the death penalty by the jury. After examining the crime scene, however, Frank thinks something does not add up about the murders and the murderer, and he determines that accused family man is not the killer ... despite his own confession to the contrary. To save an innocent man, Frank must discover the real killer, persuade the judge of the truth, and risk the wrath of local law enforcement.

**17. "Walkabout"** Written by Chip Johannesen and Tim Tankosic; Directed by Cliff Bole; airdate: March 28, 1997; *Guest Cast:* Terry O'Quinn (Peter Watts); Brittany Tiplady (Jordan Black); Stephen James Lang (Gablehouse); Bill Smitrovitch (Bletch); Zeljko Ivanek (Dr. Daniel Miller); George Itzin (Hans Ingram).

Peter Watts shows up at the Black house to inform Catherine that Frank has disappeared while working under the alias David Marx on a case. As the days pass, Frank shows up, beaten and bruised, in a dark alley, but he has amnesia and cannot remember exactly where he was or what happened to him. Frank and Peter attempt to reconstruct what transpired in Black's missing days and realize that it had something to do with a "cure" for Frank's visions, a test for an experimental drug called Proloft which treats temporal lobe anomalies. Frank remembers that somebody died during the tests, but who was the victim, who was really testing this so-called "medicine," and why?

**18. "Lamentation"** Written by Chris Carter; Directed by Winrich Kolbe; airdate: April 18, 1997; *Guest Cast:* Terry O'Quinn (Peter Watts); Brittany Tiplady (Jordan); Stephen James Lang (Gablehouse); Bill Smitrovitch (Bletch); Alex Diakun, Sarah-Jane Redmond (Lucy Butler); Michael David Simms.

An evil doctor who slit the throats of five nurses escapes from police custody after donating a kidney to his sister. The F.B.I. behavioral sciences division calls in Frank, who has caught the doctor once before, and Peter Watts to help apprehend the inhuman physician before he kills again. The trail leads to an evil woman named Lucy Butler, who just might be the devil, and the death of Frank's close friend, Bletch.

**19. "Powers, Principalities, Thrones and Dominions"** Written by Ted Mann and Harold Rosenthal; Directed by Thomas J. Wright; airdate: April 25, 1997; *Guest Cast:* Terry O'Quinn (Peter Watts); Stephen James Lang (Gablehouse); Brittany Tiplady (Jordan); Bill Smitrovitch (Bob Bletch); Richard Cox (Alistair Pepper); Robin Gammell (Mike Atkins); Rodney Eastman, Sarah-Jane Redmond (Lucy Butler); Alf Humphreys (Damon Rummer); Guy Fauchon (Martin); Dean P. Gibson (Phil Bruce); Robert Maloney (Uniformed Cop Adams); Judith Maxie (Judge Myers); Allan Franz (Medical Examiner Anderson); Bonnie Hays (A.D.A. Mills).

Frank is still recovering from his encounter with Lucy Butler and Bob Bletcher's death, but he reluctantly joins Peter Watts on a homicide case with ritualistic overtones. A suspect is apprehended quickly, but Frank feels the case is far from over, even as he experiences a vision of Bletch, a bloody apparition who tries to warn him about something. The suspect's lawyer, Alistair Pepper, offers Frank a job at his law firm, but Frank suspects it is, literally, a deal with the devil. When the suspect confesses to murdering Bob Bletch, Frank realizes that an elaborate web, a trap, is being spun to snare him and his family ... and then he spots Lucy Butler in a grocery store.

**20. "Broken World"** Written by Robert Moresco and Patrick Harbinson; Directed by Winrich Kolbe; airdate: May 2, 1997; *Guest Cast:* Terry O'Quinn (Peter Watts); Jo Anderson (Claudia Vaughn); Van Quattro, John Dennis Johnston, Donnelly Rhodes, Ingrid Kavelaars (Sally Dumont); P. Adrien Dorval (Fatso); Michael Tayles (Deputy Billy); J.B. Bivens (First Deputy).

In North Dakota, a woman is assaulted in her horse stable by a budding psycho-sexual killer responsible for twenty-one horse deaths in neighboring counties. Hoping to prevent any human murders, Frank and Peter investigate the case and Black realizes that he needs to talk to this particular madman before he graduates to the murder of a human victim. Peter Watts fears that the killer has become empowered by his recent actions, and his worry proves accurate: the psycho strikes again, kicking an innocent man to death and murdering several hogs. Frank comes to see that the killer is a man who is jealous of horses, because he feels they are taking female affection away from him.

**21. "Maranatha"** Written by Chip Johannesen; Directed by Peter Markle; airdate: May 9, 1997; *Guest Cast:* Terry O'Quinn (Peter Watts); Bill Nunn, Boris Krutonog (Yuri); Levani (Sergei Steponovitch); Michael Aniol (Priest); Dmitri Boudrine (Andrei Petrovich Melnikov); Michael Cram (Paramedic); Bill Croft (Broadface); Brian Downey (Medical Examiner); Roger Haskett (ER Doctor); Beverly Pales (Torch Singer).

Frank travels to Brighton Beach, NY, to investigate the homicide of several Russian-American citizens. The culprit seems to be a man named Yapochnik who in some way was involved at the

Chernobyl disaster in 1986. The Russian community believes a mythical monster is involved, and was actually responsible for the nuclear accident, per Revelation, Chapter 8, verse 10. Worse, this homicidal “legend” may actually be the Antichrist, a creature who will unite the ten nations of the former Soviet Union against Israel and bring about the Last Days.

**22. “Paper Dove”** Written by Walon Green and Ted Mann; Directed by Thomas J. Wright; airdate: May 16, 1997; *Guest Cast:* Brittany Tiplady (Jordan); Barbara Williams, Mike Starr, Linda Sorenson, Ken Pogue, William Nunn, Frank Cassini (Agent Devlin); Judy Norton (Carol Scammel); Garry Davey (Ranger Chet); Doris Chillcott (Adele Hunziger); Paul Raskin (Figaro); Arlen Jones (Agent Emmerlich); Eric Breker (Malcolm Hunziger); Angela Donahue (Amy Lee Walker).

Frank, Catherine, and Jordan visit Catherine’s parents in Arlington, Virginia, while the mysterious Polaroid-snapping killer plots to destroy him. Catherine’s father asks Frank to review a case for a friend who is terminally ill and estranged from his incarcerated son. Frank believes the boy is innocent of the charge of murder and the trail leads him to a psycho who is actually a patsy for the Polaroid killer. Upon return to Seattle, Catherine vanishes at the airport.

• *Second Season (1997–1998)*

**23. “The Beginning and the End”** Written by Glen Morgan and James Wong; Directed by Thomas J. Wright; airdate: September 9, 1997; *Guest Cast:* Terry O’Quinn (Peter Watts); Brittany Tiplady (Jordan Black); Doug Hutchison (Polaroid Killer); Allan Zinyk (Rodecker); Judith Maxie (Finley); Drew Reichelt (Dicky Bird Parking); Mitch Kosterman (Sheriff); Alan Robertson (Elderly Man); Norman Armour (Suited Man).

Catherine is abducted from the airport by the Polaroid Killer, who is daring Frank to catch him. The killer escapes a roadblock with Catherine still in his custody, and the Millennium Group is stirred to action. The abduction of Frank’s wife coincides with the passage of a comet in the night sky, and the killer suspects an omen: the comet overhead will give humankind a chance to decide how the end of the world will come about. Frank’s search for his wife turns to frustration when he realizes that the killer defies all attempts at profiling and understanding.

**24. “Beware of the Dog”** Written by Glen Morgan and James Wong; Directed by Allen Coulter; airdate: September 26, 1997; *Guest Cast:* Terry O’Quinn (Peter Watts); Brittany Tiplady (Jordan Black); Randy Stone (Michael Peebie); R.G. Armstrong (Old Man); Brent Butt (Short Order Cook); Ralph Alderman (Nate); Anita Wittenberg (Cora); Arnie Walters (Paul Lombardo); Margaret Martin (Mary Ann Lombardo); Sally Stevens (Radio Singer).

In the remote town of Bucksnot, a couple of tourists are terrorized and murdered by vicious dogs ... which appear to be hell-hounds. Though Frank is reluctant to investigate what appears to be a simple, if brutal, animal attack, the Millennium Group insists he go to Bucksnot to learn more. What Frank discovers is a strange town with no law enforcement facilities and a dread of sundown. When darkness comes and a pack of wild dogs starts to gather in town, Frank realizes there is more going on than meets the eye, and that the only person who can explain the mystery is an old man in the woods with the power to keep the dogs at bay.

**25. “Sense and Anti-Sense”** Written by Chip Johannesen; Directed by Thomas J. Wright; airdate: October 3, 1997; *Guest Cast:* Terry O’Quinn (Peter Watts); Stephen James Lang (Detective



Gablehouse); Allan Zinyk (Rodecker); Clarence Williams, III (Patient Zero/William Kremer); Ricky Harris, Badja Djola, Brian Jensen (Wright); Chris Nelson Norris (Patterson); Peter Bryant (Editor); Forbes Angus (Dr. Pettey); Michael Vaird (Officer Ginelli).

A kind taxi driver escorts a dying man to a Seattle hospital. Sick with hemorrhagic fever, this patient escapes with the help of the cabbie, and Frank and the CDC track him down. The mystery broadens when the CDC men vanish with their prey, and Frank suspects that the sick man was telling the truth about a secret plan involving the government's exploitation of and experimentation on the black man. Frank discovers evidence of a biological study being conducted by the D.O.E. called "The Human Genome Project."

**26. "Monster"** Written by Glen Morgan and James Wong; Directed by Perry Lang; airdate: October 17, 1997; *Guest Cast:* Terry O'Quinn (Peter Watts); Kristen Cloke (Lara Means); Brittany Tiplady (Jordan Black); Chris Owens (Deputy Bill Sherman); Robert Wisden (Sheriff); Mary Gillis, Lauren Diewold, Gillian Barber, Fred Keating, Ken Roberts (Police Chief Jenkins); Judy Norton (Coroner); J. Douglas Stewart (Dentist); Kevin Blatch (Shoe Salesman); Thomas Miller (Billy Sherman Jr.).

The Millennium Group orders Frank to a small town to investigate charges of child abuse at Mrs. Penny's Daycare. Also there is psychic Lara Means, who teams with Frank to learn why a boy has died at the center. At home, Frank is accused of child abuse when Jordan is found to have a bad cut on her gums. Although there is little evidence of abuse in either case, a mob mentality is soon born and a witchhunt begins in full flow ... with people unaware that a five-year-old girl might represent the real evil.

**27. "A Single Blade of Grass"** Written by Erin Maher and Kay Reindl; Directed by Rodman Flender; airdate: October 24, 1997; *Guest Cast:* Amy Steel (Dr. Liz Michael); Michael Greyeyes, Floyd Red Crow Esterman, Garry Chalk, Doug Abrahams, Rondel Reynoldson (Coroner Hutson); Byron Chief Moon (Fenton).

In Manhattan, a feisty archaeologist uncovers a recently murdered corpse on a construction site which is also a Native American burial ground. Frank is sent to New York to help discover the identity of the dead man, and the clues lead him to the basement of a ritzy West Side Hotel. There he finds evidence of an Indian ritual which is meant to forge a contact with the spirit world. As Frank learns more, he realizes that a lost Indian tribe, thought to be mythical, has rejoined to spur a Native American version of the apocalypse.

**28. "The Curse of Frank Black"** Written by Glen Morgan and James Wong; Directed by Ralph Hemecker; airdate: October 31, 1997; *Guest Cast:* Brittany Tiplady (Jordan Black); Dean Winters (Lt. Detective Robert Fletcher).

On Halloween, Frank takes Jordan, dressed as Marge Simpson, trick-or-treating through the neighborhood. A fleeting glimpse of a ghost spurs Frank's memory of a Halloween from his own youth. A freak breakdown of Frank's car and cell phone then lands a lonely Frank at home at his yellow house, but it is a dark vacant place filled with ghosts of strange times. One such ghost belongs to a tortured World War II veteran who knew Frank as a child, and who has now returned from the afterlife with a dire warning.

**29. "19:19"** Written by Glen Morgan and James Wong; Directed by Thomas J. Wright; airdate:

November 7, 1997; *Guest Cast*: Terry O'Quinn (Peter Watts); Kristen Cloke (Laura Means); Christian Hoff (Matthew Pine); Steve Rankin (Sheriff Cayce); Colleen Rennison (Jesse Cayce); David Abbott (Vernon Roberts); Kurt Evans (Deputy Jack); Drew McCreadie (Storm Chaser); Bill Marchant (Accomplice); Robyn Wood (Little Girl).

A young man who believes he can be the instrument to prevent the apocalypse abducts a bus-load of children in Broken Bow, Oklahoma. Frank and Watts pursue the kidnapper alongside an angry local sheriff whose daughter, Jesse, is among the missing. The madman leaves a message on a local radio show quoting the Bible, Revelation 19, verse 19. When Frank realizes there are eighteen abducted children he also realizes that the abductor will come back to kidnap child number nineteen, who stayed home from school sick that day.

**30. "The Hand of Saint Sebastian"** Written by Glen Morgan and James Wong; Directed by Thomas J. Wright; airdate: November 14, 1997; *Guest Cast*: Terry O'Quinn (Peter Watts); Phillip Baker Hall, Gottfried John, Allan Zinyk, C.C.H. Pounder (Cheryl Andrews); Stephen Dimopoulos (Detective Betzdorf); Christine Lippa (German Police Captain); Grahame Andrews (Dr. Schlossburg); Damon Johnson (Hospital Security); Stefano Giulianetti (Fugitive); Noah Heney (Provider).

Peter Watts is working on a special project, unauthorized by the Millennium Group, and he asks Frank to assist him on it in Germany. Peter, Frank, and the German police team up to investigate a thousand year old corpse preserved in a bog ... a body which dates back to the beginnings of the Millennium Group and can help Peter establish "who we are" as a race. The object of interest is the hand of St. Sebastian, a holy relic which is said to be the key to overcoming the evils of the millennium. Unfortunately, there are people and factions who are willing to kill to protect the sacred hand of St. Sebastian, and Peter is framed for a murder he has not committed.

**31. "Jose Chung's 'Doomsday Defense'"** Written and directed by Darin Morgan; airdate: November 21, 1997; *Guest Cast*: Terry O'Quinn (Peter Watts); Stephen James Lang (Detective Gablehouse); Charles Nelson Reilly (Jose Chung); Dan Zukovic (Selfosophist), Richard Steinmetz, Patrick Fabian.

Writer Jose Chung peers a bit too closely into the strange new religion "selfosophy" invented by former friend and now messiah, Onan Gupta. Frank investigates the murder of a selfosophist who broke ranks and spoke with Chung about selfosophy's internal hierarchy. Chung is also writing a doomsday book and is curious about the Millennium Group, but there is also a psycho on the loose who wants him dead.

*Note*: This episode is a sequel, of sorts, to the *X-Files* third season episode, "Jose Chung's 'From Outer Space.'" This episode also features a guest appearance (on posters only) by David Duchovny as Bobby Wingood, a whoring, hedonistic movie star and selfosophist who discovers the power of positive thinking.

**32. "Midnight of the Century"** Written by Erin Maher and Kay Reindl; Directed by Dwight Little; airdate: December 19, 1997; *Guest Cast*: Darren McGavin (Henry Black); Terry O'Quinn (Peter Watts); Brittany Tiplady (Jordan Black); Kristen Cloke (Lara Means); Allan Zinyk (Brian Rodecker); Gerry Curry (Simon); Jessica Schreier (Barbara Watts); Cheryl McNamara (Linda Black); Trevor White (Caspar); Donny Lucas (Balthasar); Tim Bissett (Melchior).

Frank prepares to spend a lonely Christmas in his new home, away from his wife and child, when he is

unexpectedly contacted by his long-absent father to whom he hasn't spoken in some forty years. Worse, on the eve of her Christmas pageant, Jordan seems to be communing with Frank's dead mother, a woman who saw angels throughout her brief life. Frank seeks the help of Lara Means in understanding Jordan's visions of angels, and then decides it is time to go home and confront his father about a fateful Christmas Eve in 1946.

**33. "Goodbye Charlie"** Written by Richard Whitley; directed by Ken Fink; airdate: January 9, 1998; *Guest Cast:* Kristen Cloke (Lara Means); Tucker Smallwood (Steven Kiley); Stephen James Lang (Gablehouse); Deanne Henry (Eleanor); Bethor Shirkoff, Stefan Arnglim, Ally Warren (Officer Nello); Dave Hurtubise (Russ); Gina Stockdale (Tammy); David MacKay (Jeff Lubo).

A strange man, apparently a doctor, is using a suicide machine and not a wee bit of physical pressure to be sure that terminally ill patients are "assisted" to their death. Frank, Lara Means, and the Millennium Group become involved, and learn that this suicide doctor is a psycho who has taken his name from the moniker of a character from the *Marcus Welby* TV series! As Frank and Lara narrow in on the suicide doctor, they realize that someone else may be pulling the strings from behind the scene.

**34. "Luminary"** Written by Chip Johannesen, Directed by Thomas J. Wright; airdate: January 23, 1998; *Guest Cast:* Terry O'Quinn (Peter Watts); Brittany Tiplady (Jordan Black); Brion James (Sheriff); Tobias Mehler, Rob Freeman, Tamsin Kelsey, Matthew Walker, Syd Van Rood (Astrologer); Gardiner Millar (Millennium Group Member); Judith Maxie (Finley); John Moore (Lecturer); Bernie Coulson (Pilot); Hagan Beggs (Doctor); Bart Anderson (Clerk); Jessica Schreier (Barbara Watts); Marke Driesscher (Weatherman).

Frank is grilled by the Group during a review of his candidacy, and he walks out of the proceedings, angry. Later, friends of Catherine ask Frank to find their eighteen-year-old son, Alex, who has gone missing in the Alaskan wilderness. When Frank goes off in search of the boy as a lone agent, Catherine enlists the help of Peter Watts, who is under strict orders from the Group *not* to help Black. Alone in the wild, Frank searches for Alex, even as his own rescue plane leaves him behind.

**35. "The Mikado"** Written by Michael Perry; Directed by Roderick J. Priddy; airdate: February 6, 1998; *Guest Cast:* Terry O'Quinn (Peter Watts); Allan Zinyk (Rodecker); Greg Michaels, Gillian Carfra (The Web Girl); Micah Gardener (Brandon); Tony Sampson (Anthony); Justin Wong (Danny); Rachel Hayward (Angela); Jonathan Bruce (Haverford Man); Aaron Fry (Columbus Man); Dawn Murphy (Special Agent Tully); Harrison R. Coe (San Francisco Officer); Patrick S. Phillips (Detective Brusky); Eileen Pedde ("Pain" Victim).

High school students surfing the net for porn run across a site called "The Mystery Room," where a twenty-six-year-old woman is bound to a chair and murdered by a hooded killer. One of the boys realizes what he has seen and prints a screen of the bloody death, the only evidence that a murder has been committed. Now Frank, Peter, and Rodecker marshal the forces of the Millennium Group to find the cyberstalker as he plots to kill a second victim when his Internet site receives a certain number of "hits." As Frank gets into the mind of his opponent, he realizes he may be dealing with a psycho called "Avatar" who committed multiple-murders in the early 1980s and has now found his enthusiasm rekindled by the advent of the Internet.

**36. "The Pest House"** Written by Glen Morgan and James Wong; Directed by Allen Coulter; airdate: February 27, 1998; *Guest Cast:* Terry O'Quinn (Peter Watts); Melinda McGraw (Dr. Alex Stohler);

Justin Louis (Edward); Michael Masseur (Cainin Purdue); Darcy Laurie (Jacob Woodcock); Amber Warnat (Christie Morris); Brendan Fehr (Kevin Galbraith); C. Ernst Harth (Bear); Michael Weaver (Ted); Jada Stark (Callie); Greg Anderson (Detective Munsch); Tyronne L'Hirondelle (Brennan); John Callandar (Attendant); Holly Ferguson (Katie).

A teenager is murdered on an isolated bridge in what appears to be a re-creation of an urban legend: a killer with a hook for a hand slaughters a girl's boyfriend and then hangs the bleeding boy upside down over the roof of his car. Though Frank is reluctant to believe in a serial killer who works from urban legends, Peter and the Millennium Group suspect an inmate (with a hook for a hand) in a local sanitarium nicknamed "The Pest House" may be involved. A second crime (the murder of a young couple) suggests that more than one maniac may be on the loose, perhaps escaped patients from the Pest House. After a third urban legend killing is narrowly averted, Frank gives credence to one inmate's terrifying belief that someone is stealing the evil out of inmates' minds and transporting the urge to kill outside the installation into murderous reality.

**37. "Owls"** Written by Glen Morgan and James Wong; Directed by Thomas J. Wright; airdate: March 6, 1998; *Guest Cast:* Terry O'Quinn (Peter Watts); Brittany Tiplady (Jordan Black); Kristen Cloke (Lara Means); Kimberly Patton (Claire Knight); R.G. Armstrong (The Old Man); Malcolm Stewart, Bob Dawson (Helmut Günsche); Michael Tiernan (Millennium Group Driver); Brian Downey (Mr. Dean); Judith Maxie (Finley); John Juliani (Mr. Plunkett); Mark Holden (Amadar); Bruno Verdon (Le Fur); Gardiner Millar (Mr. Otto).

Two factions fight it out in Damascus over an unearthed holy relic: the cross of Christ's Crucifixion. Strangely, this war seems to be fought among the chapters of a divided Millennium Group: the Owls (who believe there will be a secular apocalypse in approximately 2020) and the Roosters (who subscribe to the notion that a religious, theological apocalypse is destined to occur in the year 2000 ... just 665 days away). When it looks like Group members are murdering Group members to control the cross of Christ, which promises victory to anyone who possesses it, Peter Watts brings in Frank and Lara Means to get to the bottom of what is rapidly becoming a violent civil war. Frank has had enough of the Millennium Group's secrets and lies, however, and refuses to help Peter through the crisis, even as Catherine is courted by a suspicious German company which seems to have an unhealthy interest in Frank.

**38. "Roosters"** Written by Glen Morgan and James Wong; Directed by Thomas J. Wright; airdate: March 13, 1998; *Guest Cast:* Terry O'Quinn (Peter Watts); Stephen James Lang (Gablehouse); Kristen Cloke (Lara Means); R.G. Armstrong (The Old Man); Kimberly Patton (Claire Knight); Ernest Lenart, Philip Baker Hall, Bob Dawson (Helmut Günsche); Brian Downey (Mr. Dean); Judith Maxie (Finley); John Julian (Mr. Plunkett); Barry W. Levy (Driver); Gardiner Millar (Mr. Otto); Steve Griffith (Jim Ford); Charles Andre (Passenger).

As the civil war within the Millennium Group deepens, Frank is nearly gunned down by assassins who identify themselves as being within the Group. Meanwhile, a neo-Nazi organization called Odessa steals what it believes to be the cross of the Crucifixion and fosters the schism within the Group. The Old Man, the leader of Millennium, seeks the assistance of Frank and Laura when Odessa threatens his life and the future of the Group.

**39. "Siren"** Written by Glen Morgan and James Wong; Directed by Allen Coulter; airdate: March 20, 1998; *Guest Cast:* Terry O'Quinn (Peter Watts); Stephen James Lang (Gablehouse); Brittany Tiplady

(Jordan Black); Kristen Cloke (Lara Means); Vivian Wu (Tamara Shua Fa Lee); Tzi Ma, Ricki Cheng, Fulvio Cecere (Agent Brown); Colin Foo (Lo Fat); Simon Wong (Chin); Alannah Ong (Jennifer); Ronin (Interpreter); Michael Puttonen (Coroner); Cory Dagg (Star); Eileen Pedde (Doctor); Bobby Magee (Customs Officer).

A Chinese freighter smuggling illegal immigrants into the United States is raided by the I.N.S. Jordan makes a connection with a strange Chinese woman who was chained aboard the ship and who may now hold the key to saving Frank's life. As Lara and Frank investigate, they learn how the mysterious woman came to be aboard the ship, and how this strange siren may have killed four people she seduced. The siren attempts to seduce Frank with a vision in which the Millennium Group has no role in his life.

**40. "In Arcadia Ego"** Written by Chip Johannesen; Directed by Thomas J. Wright; airdate: April 3, 1998; *Guest Cast:* Terry O'Quinn (Peter Watts); Missy Crider, Mary-Pat Green, David Jean Thomas, Ed Lauter, Sean Campbell (Second Guard); R. Nelson Brown (First Guard); Ronald Selmour (Ernie Shiffer); Steve Oatway (Chris Taylor); Frances Flanagan (Nurse); Marina Dufort (Warden's Assistant).

Two women prisoners—lovers—escape from captivity under violent and unusual circumstances. Frank joins the hunt to bring the women to justice but quickly determines that the couple has fled authorities to protect something of vital importance. When it is learned that one of the couple, Janette, is pregnant, Frank takes care to prevent the authorities from hurting the fugitives. The two women believe they have conceived a miraculous child, but Peter and Frank think they know the truth: that Janette was (unknowingly) raped in the infirmary by a guard.

**41. "Anamnesis"** Written by Erin Maher and Kay Reindel; Directed by John Kousakis; airdate: April 17, 1998; *Guest Cast:* Terry O'Quinn (Peter Watts); Kristen Cloke (Lara Means); Gwynneth Walsh (Claire McKenna); John-Pyper Ferguson, Genele Templeton, Garry Davey, Brendan Fletcher, John B. Lowe (Reverend Sam Hanes); Kimberly Warnat (Maureen); Melanie Manuel (Kelly); Eryn Collins (Shelley); Jessica Murdoch (Leslie); Jenny Mitchell (Lydia); Christopher Gray (Buddy); Angela Moore (Teacher); A.J. Bond (Sports Boy); Mia Ingimundsen (Cloaked Woman).

Five girls in Rowan have a religious vision of Mary, and Catherine Black is asked to talk to the teenagers in her capacity as a therapist. Lara Means arrives, working for Watts and the Group, and quickly comes to loggerheads over the truth of this bizarre situation. The case takes an odd turn when Catherine and Lara discover that one girl's vision was not of the Virgin Mary, but of Mary Magdalene, the first witness of the resurrection of Christ. When a local boy attempts to kill the visionary, Lara reveals a startling secret about the girl's heritage.

**42. "A Room with No View"** Written by Ken Horton; Directed by Thomas Wright; airdate: April 24, 1998; *Guest Cast:* Terry O'Quinn (Peter Watts); Stephen James Lang (Gablehouse); Sarah-Jane Redmond (Lucy Butler); Christopher Kennedy Masterson, Chad Todhunter, Mariangela Pino, Timothy Webber.

A high school boy dies of fright, and his best friend, who was recently voted "most likely to succeed," is abducted by a sinister force. The missing boy has been taken to a kind of horror hotel run by none other than the evil, shape-shifting Lucy Butler. Though Peter is skeptical about Lucy's involvement in the case, Frank feels the chill of her presence at the crime scene. Lucy is attempting to steal the future

by abducting promising students and torturing them so that they become “ordinary.”

**43. “Somehow, Satan Got Behind Me”** Written and directed by Darin Morgan; airdate: May 1, 1998; *Guest Cast:* Bill Macy, Dick Bakalyan, Alex Diakun, Wally Dalton, Dan Zukovic (Censor), Gabrielle Rose, Stephen Holmes, Bill Mackenzie (Brock); Austin Basile (Donut Clerk); Fawnia Louise Mondey (Stripper); Kett Torton (Devil Worshipper); Michael Sunczyk (Johnnie Mark Potter).

Four demons in a rundown donut shop called The Donut Hole reminisce about the good old days when evil had more character and grandeur. One demon recounts how he nudged a youngster into becoming a serial killer ... only to see his protégé apprehended by Frank Black. Another demon recalls how a human being’s day-to-day existence can lead to evil and damnation. A third demonic story revolves around a hyper TV network standards and practices censor whose insanity grows and grows.

**44. “The Fourth Horseman”** Written by Glen Morgan and James Wong; Directed by Dwight Little; airdate: May 8, 1998; *Guest Cast:* Terry O’Quinn (Peter Watts); Brittany Tiplady (Jordan); Glenn Morshower (Richard Gilbert); Bill Dow (Pathologist); Kristen Cloke (Lara Means); Anna Hagan (Mom); Terrence Kelly (Dad); Jennifer Davis (Leslie Hopps); Bryan Vukelic (Greg Davis); David Longworth (Farmer Duffy); Lindsay Bourne (Physician #1); Max Wyman (Group Member); Fred Henderson (Agent Russell); Eileen Pedde (Dr. Miriam Greenwood).

A representative from the Trust attempts to recruit Frank into its ranks, even as Frank learns of his father’s death. Later, Peter Watts brings Frank in on a case in which a man has died of a fast-acting and highly infectious disease. A pathologist determines that Peter and Frank may have been exposed to the disease, and they are whisked away to quarantine by the Millennium Group and unknowingly given an antidote to this “Marburg Variant” plague. Frank begins to realize that the Millennium Group is plotting to release this mutant strain for a planned armageddon which will leave them in control of a decimated world, and worse, Frank discovers that there is not enough antidote available to save his wife and daughter.

**45. “The Time Is Now”** Written by Glen Morgan and James Wong; Directed by Thomas J. Wright; airdate: May 15, 1998; *Guest Cast:* Terry O’Quinn (Peter Watts); Brittany Tiplady (Jordan Black); Glenn Morshower (Richard Gilbert); Kristen Cloke (Lara Means); Daryl Shuttleworth (Brian Dixon); David Palffy (Dr. Sorenson); Hiro Kanagawa (Team Member Lewis); Ian Robinson (Computer Monitor); Barry W. Levy (Braylock); Stephen Macht.

Frank has promised Catherine that he will leave the Millennium Group once and for all, and return with her and Jordan to their yellow house ... but events rapidly unfold which change Frank Black’s life in a very dramatic way. The Marburg Variant disease is spreading now, and Lara Means is having a nervous breakdown because she has psychically witnessed the future engineered by the Group. She gives Frank her antidote serum, but as the virus spreads, Frank knows it will not be enough. The Blacks flee the city for a cabin in the woods as the outbreak gets worse, and soon Catherine becomes infected.

• *Third Season (1998–1999)*

**46. “The Innocents”** Written by Michael Duggan; Directed by Thomas J. Wright; airdate: October 3, 1998; *Guest Cast:* Brittany Tiplady (Jordan Black); Peter Outerbridge (Agent Barry Baldwin); Stephen E. Miller (Andy McLaren); Katy Boyer, Ken Pogue, Averie Maddox, Maxine Miller, Doris Chillcott

(Elderly Woman); Judith McDowell (Dr. Luanna Chase); Francoise Yip (Flight Attendant #2); Damon Gregory (Larry Palmer); Barry W. Levy (Passenger); Garvin Cross (Trucker); Frances Flanagan (Nurse); Gerry Narini (NTSB Investigator).

A commercial airline goes down with all aboard (including twenty-three children) as a result of a strange conspiracy involving blonde women. Frank Black and his daughter Jordan have relocated to Falls Church, Virginia, after an outbreak of plague in the Pacific Northwest and the death of Catherine Black. Frank has rejoined the F.B.I. and on his first case he teams with novice agent Emma Hollis at the airplane crash site in the Sierras. There he begins to suspect that the Millennium Group was involved with the crash. Soon, another blonde woman and her child are murdered in a house bombing and Frank suspects yet another connection.

**47. “Exegesis”** Written by Chip Johannesen; Directed by Ralph Hemecker; airdate: October 10, 1998; *Guest Cast:* Brittany Tiplady (Jordan Black); Peter Outerbridge (Agent Barry Baldwin); Stephen E. Miller (Andy McClaren); Terry O’Quinn (Peter Watts); Katy Boyer, Ken Pogue, Averie Maddox, Maxine Miller, Doris Chillcot (Elderly Woman); William Richert (Tom Coty); Demetri Goritsas (Agent Dixon); Barry W. Levy (Millennium Group Member); Tim Dixon (Forensic Doctor); Ted Cole (Dr. Thomas); Frances Flanagan (Nurse).

Another mother and daughter are dead, and Frank believes that the unusual women are seers, oracles, who can gaze into the future. Worse, he believes they are being systematically annihilated by the Millennium Group so as to protect some kind of “end of the world” scenario. Emma Hollis and Frank learn of a CIA program called “Grillflame” in which “Remote Viewers” psychically project themselves into the minds of enemies and foreign operatives. Now these women and their daughters, descendants of the most powerful Remote Viewer, Number 512, are seeking some way to survive in a world that wants them dead.

**48. “Teotwawki”** Written by Chris Carter and Frank Spotnitz; Directed by Thomas J. Wright; airdate: October 16, 1998; *Guest Cast:* Brittany Tiplady (Jordan Black); Peter Outerbridge (Agent Baldwin); Stephen E. Miller (Andy McClaren); Robert Wisden (Chris Carmody); Stephen James Lang (Gablehouse), Eric Keenleyside, Laurie Murdoch, Andrew Johnson, Michelle Skalnik, John Gingell (Carlton King); Hilary Strang (Mrs. Carmody); Jeremy Guilbaut (Brent Carmody); Sasha McLean (Tammy Meador); Keith Martin Gordey (Software Engineer).

A high school pep rally in Seattle turns terrifying when a sniper opens fire on the crowd and kills several people. The F.B.I. opens an investigation, but the stakes are higher than anyone realizes. Frank learns that Y2K and the predicted collapse of a computer-dependent American society have led some corporate executives and their high school age children to prepare for doomsday. The shooting spree may be the result of one child’s feeling of hopelessness about the future ... and may be only the first such act of violence.

*Note:* TEOTWAWKI stands for The End of the World as We Know It.

**49. “Closure”** Written by Laurence Andries; Directed by Daniel Sackheim; airdate: October 23, 1998; *Guest Cast:* Garret Dillahunt (Richard Van Horn); Shelley Owens (Joanie); Michael Sunczyk (Peter); Jason Gray-Stanford (Kyle); Dee Jay Jackson (Detective Jay Cooper); Don McWilliams (Conner); Howard Siegel (Transient); Carol Alexander (Woman in Bar); Bob Dawson (Captain Kevin Mann); Tim Henry (Sheriff Taylor); Christopher R. Sumpton (Tow Driver); Robert Luft (F.P.D. Officer).

Special Agent Hollis investigates a seemingly random murder in a seedy motel wherein the shooting victim's penis has been chopped off, presumably as a trophy. The perpetrators are a pair of thugs who delight in the torment of others and even "play" at being snipers in a public park. The case strikes a special chord with Hollis, who in childhood suffered her own personal trauma and seemingly random crime when her sister, Melissa, was murdered. As Hollis struggles to understand both the crime in her past and the criminal she is pursuing, the killers claim further victims, including a hapless mountain biker who dies in a game of "William Tell."

**50. "13 Years Later"** Written by Michael R. Perry; Directed by Thomas J. Wright; airdate: October 30, 1998; *Guest Cast:* Jeff Yagher (Marc Bianco); Jim Pirri, Donnelly Rhodes, Matthew Walker, Kate Luyben, KISS, Stefan Arngrim (Hugo Winston); Crystal Cass (Ramona/Mary); Andre Danyliu (Major Dooley); Tanja Reichert (Ruby Dahl); Paul Stanley (Director Lew Carroll); Gene Simmonds (Hector Leachman); Ace Frehley (Sick Cop); Peter Criss (Nice Cop); Dana Grahame (Sarah Cryer); Ted Kozma (Kenny Neiderman); Morgan Brayton (Assistant Director); Guy Fauchon (Movie Sheriff); Edmond Wong and Cavan Cunningham (Gaffers).

Art imitates life when an actress on the set of a horror movie shooting in Trinity, South Carolina, is brutally murdered after a shower. Frank and Emma go to the set and Frank discovers that the film is based on a case he investigated thirteen years earlier. Thespian Marc Bianco is playing F.B.I. agent Frank Black, a bureau profiler who pursues the Madman Maniac to a KISS concert. When the case produces no useful leads, Hollis suggests that she and Frank review a selection of horror films including *Halloween*, *Psycho*, and *Friday the 13th* to help them catch the movie-obsessed psycho-killer.

**51. "Skull and Bones"** Written by Chip Johannessen and Ken Horton; Directed by Paul Shapiro; airdate: November 6, 1998; *Guest Cast:* Peter Outerbridge (Agent Baldwin); Arye Gross; Stephen E. Miller (Andy McClaren); C.C.H. Pounder (Cheryl Andrews); Terry O'Quinn (Peter Watts).

A freeway construction crew in Fingus, Maine, uncovers a mass unmarked grave where several skeletons are found in the mud. Peter Watts leads the investigation on behalf of the Millennium Group, but Frank also becomes involved when his section chief, McClaren, informs him that someone has sent him letters detailing several unsolved murders, with mention of Fingus. Frank tracks down the mysterious writer to Arlington, Virginia, and finds a man who has kept detailed notes about the activities of the Millennium Group for more than fifteen years.

**52. "Through a Glass Darkly"** Written by Patrick Harbinson; Directed by Thomas J. Wright; airdate: November 13, 1998; *Guest Cast:* Brittany Tiplady (Jordan Black); Tom McCleister (Max Brunelli); Scott Sowers, Paul Jarret, William MacDonald (Sheriff); Eileen Pedde (Karen Jarret); Karin Konoval (Dr. Angela Horvath); Ron Suave (Brunelli's Dad); Shawna Delgaty (Julie Jarret); Tiffany DesRosiers (Shannon McNulty); Michelle Hart (Casey Peterson); Jim Poyner (Judge); Marco Roy (Deputy Lucas); Anthony Ulc (Deputy Bobby).

Twenty years ago, a simpleton named Max Brunelli was arrested for abusing and murdering several adolescent girls. Now he is headed home, to the abject disgust of the community where the crimes occurred; girls are disappearing again, and Max Brunelli is the prime suspect. Frank and Emma go to the scene of the vanishing to learn the truth, but Frank becomes more and more convinced that Brunelli is innocent now ... just as he was two decades ago. Now it's a race against time to learn exactly what Brunelli knows about the real perpetrator before another innocent girl dies of starvation.



**53. "Human Essence"** Written by Michael Duggan; Directed by Thomas J. Wright; airdate: December 11, 1998; *Guest Cast:* Peter Outerbridge (Agent Barry Baldwin); Stephen E. Miller (Andy McClaren); Samaria Graham (Tamra Caffrey); Darryl Quon (Pulga); Rick Dobran (Johnny); Hiro Kanagawa (Detective Rondell); Winston Brown (House Staffer); Stephen Chang (Mr. Ho); Mikela J. Mikael (Elissa); Jargito D. Vargas (Young Dealer); Donald Fong (Kai Lam); David MacKay (Medical Examiner); Judi Closkey (Vancouver Trustee).

Emma Hollis is relieved of duty when she fails a random drug test for heroin. Frank is convinced his new partner is no abuser of drugs and asks for her to explain what happened. Emma refuses to talk and heads to Vancouver in search of a woman named Tamra Caffrey, whose friend died after a bad drug trip which transformed her into an inhuman-looking monster. A concerned Frank follows Emma, and between them they track down a vengeful Asian drug-trafficker who is secretly working for the U.S. government and the DEA, and putting poisoned drugs on the street.

**54. "Omerta"** Written by Michael R. Perry; Directed by Paul Shapiro; airdate: December 18, 1998; *Guest Cast:* Brittany Tiplady (Jordan Black); Jon Polito (Eddie Scorpino Giannini); Bob Morrissey, Tom McBeath, James DiStefano, Michelle Beauchamp, Keegan Tracy, Nelson Brown, Arthur Corber (Danny); Salvatore Sortino (Paolo Stefano); Nicole Robert (Front Desk Clerk); Patrick Keating (Dr. Rice).

At Christmas time, Frank takes Jordan on vacation to a small town where a mythical creature called Little Foot is said to exist. More bizarre than that, Frank discovers evidence of some kind of "feminine energy" in the woods, a spirit who heals those who have been killed, including a gangland hitman Eddie Giannini who was supposedly murdered on December 20, 1989. Eddie tells Frank that he is protecting a secret in the woods, but is it Little Foot, a wood sprite, or an angel who dwells in secret there? Hollis and Frank find the entrance to a secret dwelling and uncover two innocent women with extraordinary powers.

**54. "Borrowed Time"** Written by Chip Johannessen; Directed by Dwight Little; airdate: January 15, 1999; *Guest Cast:* Brittany Tiplady (Jordan Black); Eric Mabius (Death); Amanda Tapping (Doctor); Bill Dow (CDC Examiner); Kim Hawthorne (Nurse); Jenny Lynn Hutcheon (Little Girl); Andrea MacDonald (Girl's Mother); Tonjha Richardson (Business Woman); Colin Murdock (Business Man); Andrew Wheeler (Priest); Tom Pickett (Train Conductor); Nina Roman (Gertrude Epstein); Paul Magel (Orthodox Son); Robert Thurston (R.I.L. Director); Kerry Sandomirsky (R.I.L. Woman); David Pauls (Yuppie); Ted Cole (Paramedic); Ben Derrick (Track Controller); Ian Marsh (Track Controller); Ingrid Tesch (Mom w/Camera); Corey Storin (Patrick Varad).

In the middle of a very dry park, a woman spontaneously drowns to death. Soon, another woman suffers the same fate in equally mysterious circumstances. Frank and Emma look into the drownings and discover that both victims have survived fatal or near-fatal incidents and thereby cheated "death" of a prize. Frank suspects that "death," an evil personification, may be mad about that fact, even as Jordan, who is also living on borrowed time after surviving a bout of meningitis, has fallen ill.

**55. "Collateral Damage"** Written by Michael R. Perry; Directed by Thomas J. Wright; airdate: January 22, 1999; *Guest Cast:* Terry O'Quinn (Peter Watts); James Marsters (Eric Swan); Stephen E. Miller (Andy McClaren); Jacinda Barrett (Taylor Watts); Art Bell (Himself); Terry David Mulligan, Brendan Fehr (Nick Carfagna); Jessica Schreier (Mrs. Watts); Bob Wilde (Mabius); Bill Merchant (David Cougar); Kaare Anderson (Raid Agent); Tony Alcantar (Chuck); David Lewis (FBI

Technician); Laura Mennell (Sorority Sister #1); Kea Wong (Sorority Sister #2).

Peter Watts' daughter is kidnapped while away at college in Virginia, and Peter asks for Frank's help in rescuing her, even though there is still bad blood between them concerning the Millennium Group and Catherine's death. Frank is reluctant to help, but he and Hollis begin the search for the missing girl even as young Taylor Watts is infected with the same disease (the Marburg Variant) which killed Catherine Black and the seventy others in the outbreak in the Pacific Northwest. The culprit is a Gulf War veteran who has knowledge that the government and the Millennium Group conspired to use a deadly biological weapon against American soldiers in Kuwait, and now wants a confession from Peter Watts. The Group will not permit such an admission of guilt, so Taylor's life rests with Frank's ability to empathize with the ex-soldier.

**56. "The Sound of Snow"** Written by Patrick Harbinson; Directed by Paul Shapiro; airdate: February 5, 1999; *Guest Cast:* Brittany Tiplady (Jordan Black); Stephen James Lang (Detective Gablehouse); Jessica Tuck (Alice Severin); Megan Gallagher (Catherine Black); Deanna Milligan (Carol Wheatley); Christina Jastrzembska (Mrs. Wheatley); Trevor White (Doug Scaife); Todd Ritchey (Jerry Origo); Ryan Robbins (Mailer); Mark McConchie (Home Owner).

A mysterious source is sending out static-filled audio tapes which induce hallucinations in listeners and eventually cause tragic "accidental" deaths. A woman with a secret in her past about ice and snow dies in an imaginary ice storm, and a man who was once involved with fire dies in an imagined conflagration. Frank and Emma investigate the tapes, and Frank soon receives one at his old Seattle address—at the yellow house, now painted white. As he listens to the tape, Frank finds himself reliving the outbreak near Seattle, and his last encounter with his wife, Catherine.

**57. "Antipas"** Written by Chris Carter and Frank Spotnitz; Directed by Thomas J. Wright; airdate: February 12, 1999; *Guest Cast:* Art Hindle (John Saxum); Stephen E. Miller (Andy McClaren); Susan Hogan (Una Saxum); Jay Brazeau (Mr. Wassanau); Rachel Victoria (Divina Saxum); Sarah-Jane Redmond (Lucy Butler); Scott Heindl (Long-Haired Man); Lloyd Berry (Gardener); Nancy Sivak (Nurse); Fulvio Cecere (Detective); John Harris (Agent); Brian Drummond (Second Agent).

Satanic Lucy Butler has found her way to the Antipas Estate of a wealthy politician hoping to become state governor. She befriends a sickly young girl, the politician's daughter, and claims to be her mother. Investigating a murder in a hotel room far away, Hollis and Frank soon find their way to Lucy in Wisconsin. Strangely, Lucy wants Frank close: she wants him to make her pregnant! In a bizarre dream, Frank is raped by Lucy ... as a horned demon ... but Lucy soon claims the opposite—that Frank was the rapist ... and she has the bruises to prove it.

**58. "Matryoshka"** Written by Erin Maher and Kay Reindl; Directed by Arthur Forney; airdate: February 19, 1999; *Guest Cast:* Barbara Bain (Lily Unser); Peter Outerbridge (Agent Barry Baldwin); Dean Winters, Mark Houghton, Peter Hanlon, David Fredericks, Marie Stillin (Natalie); Wally Dalton, Matthew Walker, Terry O'Quinn (Peter Watts); Ocean Hellman (Young Lily Unser); Vince Metcalfe (General Groves); Mecca Menaro (Young Natalie); Monica Gemmer (Secretary); Tiffany Burns (Reporter); Alex Ferguson (Dr. Caton); Jim Thornburn (Agent).

An aging F.B.I. agent kills himself, leaving only the cryptic message "it must end." Emma and Frank investigate his suicide and realize it has something to do with a bizarre case from 1945, a case involving the atom bomb, murdered scientists at Los Alamos, a fledgling Millennium Group

spearheaded by J. Edgar Hoover himself, and the atomic splitting of a man's good and evil qualities. Hours before Agent Lanyard committed suicide, he was visited by Peter Watts, who is once more protecting a Group secret: a scientist from 1945 sought to split his soul as he had split the atom, creating an evil doppelganger called Kroll. Now, Kroll's child has grown up to repeat her father's mistake in "playing God."

**59. "Forcing the End"** Written by Marjorie David; Directed by Thomas J. Wright; airdate: March 20, 1999; *Guest Cast:* Andreas Katsulas (Gorovich); Stephen E. Miller (McLaren); Juliet Landau (Jean Cohen Borenstein); Peter Wilds (Daniel Borenstein); Shae Popovich (Rachel); Terry O'Quinn (Peter Watts); Jason Emanuel (Cult Member); Klodyne Rodney (Security Guard); Anthony Santiago (Print Tech).

An expectant Jewish woman is abducted from her home in New York by a strange cult which has plans for the unborn child. The cult wants to rebuild a temple in Jerusalem (over a mosque) that will trigger the return of the messiah and bring about the end of the world, and the baby represents the future of the priesthood in the so-called third temple. Peter Watts and the Millennium Group become involved, and Hollis suspects that such involvement is evil ... but McLaren makes it clear that such suspicions are unacceptable. Now Frank and Emma must save the newly born baby, discover the reason behind Peter Watts' interest in the case, and prevent the end of the world.

**60. "Saturn Dreaming of Mercury"** Written by Jordan Hawley and Chip Johannesen; Directed by Paul Shapiro; airdate: April 9, 1999; *Guest Cast:* Brittany Tiplady (Jordan Black); Michael Boischever (Will Sanderson); Colleen Winton (Jean Sanderson); Dillon Moen, Gabrielle Rose, Jane Perry (Principal Hawes); Connor Widdows (Calvin); Helen Taylor (ER Nurse); Ian Robison (ER Doctor); O'Neil Mark (Police Officer); Paul Dickson (Firefighter); Sarah Jane Redmond (Lucy Butler).

Young Jordan has a vision of a little boy named Lucas, a new classmate, in danger. She sees his father as a demonic creature and tries to warn the boy, but Lucas seems afraid of her. Frank grows worried when Jordan begins to behave badly in school and starts talking to an imaginary friend named Simon. Worse, she insists that Lucas's father is a murderer who killed a woman in Phoenix. Jordan soon enters Lucas's house illicitly and finds a weird collection of antique glass eyeballs, as well as a much darker secret.

**61. "Darwin's Eye"** Written by Patrick Harbinson; Directed by Ken Fink; airdate: April 16, 1999; *Guest Cast:* Peter Outerbridge (Agent Baldwin); Tracy Middendorf (Cassie Doyle); Peter Simmonds (Joe McNulty); Kevin McNulty, John Beasley, Lesley Ewen (Dr. Heath); Alfred E. Humphrey (Sheriff Randall); Alex Zahara (Dane); Kurt Evans (Clerk); Cam Chai (Ranjiti Patel); Shawna Delgaty (Young Cass).

A mute psychiatric patient named Cassie escapes from her high-security facility after seven years, leaving behind a decapitated corpse and a cell wall filled with mysterious and prophetic writings. Frank and Emma investigate both the current crime and the seven-year-old murder of Cassie Doyle's parents ... which she claims was committed by men in suits. The clue central to this case turns out to be the symbol of two wild palms ... and a secret rape from the girl's childhood also figures prominently. Meanwhile, Emma's father becomes sick and starts mailing origami palm trees to her.

**62. "Bardo Thodol"** Written by Virginia Stock and Chip Johannesen; Directed by Thomas J. Wright; airdate: April 23, 1999; *Guest Cast:* Brittany Tiplady (Jordan Black); James Hong (Monk); Stephen E.

Miller (McLaren); Tzi Ma (Dr. Steven Takahashi); Terry O'Quinn (Peter Watts); Bob Wilde (Mabius); Trevor White (Doug Scaife); Patrick McManus (Agent); Daniel Bacon (Bio Tech); Jefferson Dylan (Harbor Cop); Hiro Kanagawa (Shopkeeper); Kevan Ohtsji (Hotel Clerk); Anees Peterman (Receptionist); Sean Millington (Guard).

Working on a supposedly routine case, Emma discovers a cooler filled with severed human hands aboard a Japanese ship, even as Frank's computer is infiltrated by a virus which warns him of a coming apocalypse. Calligraphy on the wall of the Japanese ship repeats the same cryptic warning. An F.B.I. investigation soon reveals that the human hands are growing, alive somehow, and a computer tech studying the virus reports that it is continually rewriting itself, like a snake eating its own tail (the symbol of the Millennium Group). As Frank and Emma conduct their separate investigations, they become involved with a Millennium Group organization called Emergen Corps and a project involving the transubstantiation of the human species.

**63. "Seven in One"** Written by Chris Carter and Frank Spotnitz; Directed by Peter Markle; airdate: April 30, 1999; *Guest Cast:* Brittany Tiplady (Jordan Black); Stephen E. Miller (McLaren); Maxine Miller (Psychologist); Bob Wilde (Mabius); Dean Norris (Boxer); Ken Pogue.

On Jordan's eighth birthday, Frank receives in the mail a series of digitally enhanced photographs depicting him dead in his own bath tub. A special F.B.I. profiler assists Frank and Emma to find the killer, and the key seems to be Frank's childhood fear of drowning. Soon, the profiler suspects that Frank is having another breakdown and that he is in fact responsible for the odd events. When Frank begins to believe he has lost his mind, he decides it is time to quit the F.B.I.

**64. "Nostalgia"** Written by Michael R. Perry; Directed by Thomas J. Wright; airdate: May 7, 1999; *Guest Cast:* April Telek (Liddy Hopper); Jem Griffin (Lana); Lisa Marie Caruk (Jan McCall); Jim Shield (Lee Smith); Blake Stovin (Deputy Wayne Johnson); Ron Small (Ron Hauge); Ian Brown (Minister); Paul Cehvreau (Grave Digger); Madeleine Campbell (Cora); Kaitlyn Burke (Alicia); Linnea Sharples (Alicia's Mom); R. David Stephens (Agent).

A brutal murder leads Frank and Emma back to Emma's hometown, where dangerous secrets soon spill out and cause turmoil. The recent murder can only be solved by examining a similar murder from five years ago, a case which seems to implicate many of the men on the local police force. The victim then was a promiscuous young woman, a local, and her death may have been the springboard for a serial killer who hoped to be caught and was disappointed by society when he remained free.

**65. "Via Dolorosa"** Written by Marjorie David and Patrick Harbinson; Directed by Paul Shapiro; airdate May 14, 1999; *Guest Cast:* Terry O'Quinn (Peter Watts); Brittany Tiplady (Jordan Black); Peter Outerbridge (Baldwin); John Beasley, Matthew Glave, Jeff Parise, Kevin McNulty, Ken Roberts (Warden); Mark Humphrey (Marcetti); Andrew Wheeler (Father Murray); Trevor White (Doug Scaife); Carla White (Cyndie Dryden); Paul Kane (John Dryden); John Mann (Detective Krebbe); Sarah Macauley (Maria Jones); Frida Betrani (Art Teacher); Khaire E. (Susan Suzie).

While Emma continues to cope with her terminally ill father, she and Frank investigate the brutal murders of a young suburban couple. After viewing the crime scene, Frank becomes convinced that the killer is actually a man whom he saw executed in the electric chair weeks earlier. Peter Watts approaches Emma with a possible cure for her father—in exchange for two things: her complicity with and loyalty to the Millennium Group, and her assistance in forcing Frank out of the FBI.

**66. “Goodbye to All This”** Written by Ken Horton and Chip Johannesen; Directed by Thomas J. Wright; airdate: May 21, 1999; *Guest Cast:* Brittany Tiplady (Jordan); Terry O’Quinn (Peter Watts); Peter Outerbridge (Baldwin); Stephen E. Miller (McLaren); John Beasley, Jeff Parise, Kevin McNulty, Jade Malle.

While continuing to pursue a vicious serial killer, Franks grows convinced that the Millennium Group is involved in the death of special agent Baldwin. McLaren plans to retire from the bureau, leaving Emma Hollis in charge ... but he is unaware that she is being courted by the Millennium Group. Frank confronts Peter Watts, suspecting that the Millennium Group wants him back and will do anything to get him—even trigger another mental breakdown, and even threaten the life of Jordan. Soon, a startling betrayal is in the offing, a high-ranking Millennium Group member is killed in a bloody assassination, and an unexpected flight from this paranoid, dangerous world of betrayal and shifting loyalty follows.

## *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* (1997– )

### CRITICAL RECEPTION

“It’s *Romeo and Juliet* in black leather and mini skirts. Sarah Michelle Gellar as Buffy may have finally kicked asunder that tired cliché of the screaming maiden in distress. Here is a heroine who can be sexy without being trashy, tough without resorting to twisted variations of machismo, and funny without the forced goofiness prevalent in today’s comedy. It’s the best the WB has to offer ... so catch up with the narrative ... and give its horror and humor a chance ... just about the best horror show on television.”—Frederick C. Szebin, *Cinefantastique*: “Horror on Television,” October 1997, page 119.

“a wry satire of suburban teenage life ... and a post-feminist parable on the challenge of balancing one’s personal and work life ... Buffy has vampires to kill, but she also has to find time for boys and Ben & Jerry’s.”—*Time Magazine*, December 29, 1997, page 137.

“a slam-bang series that prides itself on its blithe knowingness and sarcasm and just keeps getting better at juggling hilarity, gothic romance, and horror ... no show this side of *Seinfeld* loves the language of conversation (the wisecrack, the pun, the withering retort, and the muttered aside) as much ... Give series creator Joss Whedon credit; no other show balances so many elements as deftly, without a trace of corniness or melodrama.”—Ken Tucker, *Entertainment Weekly*: “Ouija Broads,” November 6, 1998.

“a literal scream and always a hoot. Better yet, it’s smart, with unfailingly glib dialogue that’s more believable than *Dawson’s Creek*’s hyperbabble.”—Matt Roush, *TV Guide*, January 2-8, 1999, page 23.

“she’s hyper-responsible about her ... chores, a sort of Bionic Woman with a superior work ethic. It sounds odd and goofy and off-putting, this gothic drama for the Clearasil nation. But aside from the self-aware, brand-name-and-psychotherapy-rich patter, the show is the pretty traditional story of a girl in search of herself and the guy she loves.”—Barbara Lippert, *New York*: “Hey There, Warrior Girl,” December 15, 1997, page 25.

### FORMAT

High school student, blonde bombshell, and teenage shopping queen Buffy Summers (Sarah Michelle Gellar) has learned that she is the “Chosen One,” a super strong “slayer” of vampires who only comes along once in a generation. Buffy discovers her destiny not a moment too soon, because she and her single mother (Kristine Sutherland) have just moved to Sunnydale, a cheery little southern California town which happens to sit over a portal to hell known affectionately by demons as the “Hellmouth.” Buffy’s vampire slaying skills are required immediately, and the high school student is trained by a British “watcher,” Rupert Giles (Anthony Stewart Head), who also works as the high school librarian. Along with her friends, Xander (Nicholas Brendan), a good-humored geek, Willow (Alyson Hannigan), a sweet-hearted innocent and budding witch, Cordelia (Charisma Carpenter), a rich snob, and later Oz (Seth Green), a werewolf with his own band, Buffy fights not only blood-sucking vampires, but robots (“Ted”), humanoids from the deep (“Go Fish”), parasitic puppet masters (“Bad Eggs”), fraternity cultists who serve a lizard God (“Reptile Boy”), demonic under-dwellers (“Anne”),

the grim personification of death itself (“Killed by Death”), abusive Dr. Jekyll/Mr. Hyde boyfriends (“Beauty and the Beasts”), zombies (“Dead Man’s Party”), and the like. In addition to these guest beasties, the intrepid Buffy has faced a recurring main villain for each of the three seasons she has been staking vampires before a TV audience. In the first season, evil was represented by a bald Nosferatu-like demon called the Master; in the second by Drusilla and Spike, a vampire *Bonnie and Clyde* team; and in the third by a Mr. Rogers like town mayor who was planning to ascend to full demonhood come graduation day in the spring. Also in the third season, Buffy faced off against her greatest, most interesting opponent yet: a fellow slayer named Faith (Eliza Dushku) who came to serve the evil mayor as the season progressed.

Of course, no description of *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* would be complete without a mention of one of its most popular and successful components: the doomed love affair between Buffy and Angel (David Boreanaz), a vampire with a (sometimes) soul. Although the flip-sounding title of this series indicates a juvenile romp, nothing could be further from the truth. This show is one of the best things to happen to the horror genre in the last thirty years. As *Forever Knight* employed vampirism as a metaphor for alcoholism and addiction, so does *Buffy* use supernatural happenings/creatures to describe the terror of adolescence and growing up. Thus Buffy learns firsthand that boys change after sex when she makes love to Angel and he consequently loses his soul, and so on. Clever, funny, and often unbelievably tragic, *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* is so much better than its title suggests.

*Buffy the Vampire Slayer* began airing on the new WB network in winter of 1997, and it has been a fixture of Monday and Tuesday nights ever since. Buffy will soon return for a fourth season, but format changes are in the offing: Angel and Cordelia are leaving Sunnydale (and the series) for their own spin-off, and therefore ending the *Romeo and Juliet* aspect of the series which has worked so beautifully for three years.

## HISTORY

It is probably fair (though a little cruel) to state that not many people had high hopes for a TV series based on the film *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* (1992). The film, starring Kristy Swanson, Luke Perry, Donald Sutherland, Paul Reubens, and Rutger Hauer, was a bit of a letdown: a horror comedy that was neither particularly scary nor particularly amusing. It was a mildly fun picture, to be sure, concerning a popular but moderately dim-witted girl who found that she was the “Chosen One,” a human being genetically destined to kill vampires. Still, the central joke of the film was well-constructed as one of purposeful contrasts. On one hand, Buffy was just Buffy, a vapid, selfish mall-rat who loved to shop at malls, go to dances, and attract the boys. This side of Buffy was epitomized by her chic put-down line “you are sooo five minutes ago.”

On the other hand, Buffy was also the vampire slayer, a rather serious-sounding position with all kinds of responsibilities and dangers attached. The very title of the piece, *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, exemplified perfectly the contrast, and the central joke, of the picture. In concept, this conceit of contrasts forced together in one package, a teenage girl, is quite good, and even artistic, but the direction and execution of the theme by director Frank Rubel Kuzui left more than a little to be desired. In particular, a flabby Rutger Hauer did not capture the right tone of menace necessary to make his master vampire seem a real danger. With no significant threat in *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, there was no real conflict, and the movie was listless instead of rousing. Still, the picture was a modest success, even though it failed to walk the successful line of horror/comedy that *Fright Night* (1985) and *Return of the Living Dead* (1985) had so adroitly managed.

Joss Whedon, the talented writer who conceived *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, was not particularly pleased with the finished film either. He had wanted the picture to be scary, funny, and hip, and he had the smarts and awareness to realize that not all the notes he had strived for in his screenplay had been perfectly reached by the movie. Whedon, something of a *wunderkind* for his rewrite of *Speed* (1994), his screenplay for the popular animated hit *Toy Story* (1995), and his series-reviving script for the fourth in the long-lived *Alien* series, *Alien Resurrection* (1997), thus took matters into his own hands and decided in late 1996 to revive the *Buffy* concept ... as a weekly television series. Again, it is safe to say that few held out hope that a TV show, based on a tepid movie, would be any good. Dimming expectations further, the show was slotted to air on a fledgling sixth network from Warner Brothers called the WB, a network that, unlike the UPN (which had *Star Trek: Voyager* to its credit, at least), seemed to have no dramatic programming on its schedule ... just black-culture oriented situation comedies which seemed to appeal only to the lowest common denominator.

Amazingly, through a combination of several factors, including the maligned venue of a sixth network with the patience to let its product grow, the TV series *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* emerged in early 1997 as the surprise critical and viewer success of the season. Critics understood immediately what Whedon was striving for this time, and the contrast between Buffy the teenager and Buffy the slayer of vampires was captured far more skillfully.

It is difficult to list all the myriad ways in which the TV offshoot of *Buffy* managed to surpass (by miles) the quality of the original early-'90s film. One should make mention of the fact that Joss Whedon re-imagined Buffy not as the popular queen bitch of high school, but as a sympathetic, resourceful girl whose position as vampire slayer made her every bit as much an outcast as the geek, the nerd, the band fag, or the plain Jane. That she came from a broken home with a single parent made her even more likable and sympathetic. That her watcher became a surrogate father figure also added considerably to the human equation, which the show has generated so competently. But mostly, this reconception of the title character as a recognizable, likable (rather than snide) human being was vitally important to the success of the new series. Equally impressive was the skill and charisma of the actress who was contracted to play her. Sarah Michelle Gellar (late of the TV soap *All My Children*) brought a combination of virtues to her TV portrayal of this new hero. She combined strength, self-discipline, and determination with healthy, athletic good looks. She meshed a rapier wit with a soft, vulnerable side. She transmitted a high level of humanity to the horror stories that few young actresses could have managed. Quite simply, Gellar ended up giving a consistently superb performance in a role which had once belonged exclusively in the "dumb blonde" category. Were not most award-givers prejudiced against horror as a genre, Sarah Michelle Gellar (*I Know What You Did Last Summer* [1997], *Scream 2* [1997], *Small Soldiers* [1998]) would certainly have been nominated (and won) three Emmy Awards by now. She really is that good on this show. She *carries* the drama as easily as Buffy trades quips with vampires or changes (always fashionable) clothes. If there is a Sarah Michelle Gellar fan club out there, sign this author up!

Whedon then did something else that was brilliant when he reconceptualized *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*. He surrounded his new Buffy with likable, distinct characters who were all outcasts in the wild jungle of high school life: the nerd-geek Xander (a child of alcoholics), the smart kid Willow (neglected by her psychologist mother), and the band boy Oz (a werewolf). The audience soon came to identify with each of these outcasts as they banded together to become something meaningful: a vampire slaying brigade. Also part of the gang was the show's primary comedic relief, Cordelia



Chase, a sarcastic, popular girl who resembled the Buffy character of the film. Cordelia's presence kept the wit and put-down quotient of the series high, and was a pointed contrast to the redesigned, more human Buffy. Cordelia, Xander, Buffy, Willow, and Oz have become what several sources have termed "The Scooby Gang" because they resemble the characters of the *Scooby Doo* cartoon (smart girl; pretty girl; dopey guy); but that easy hook does not encompass all the elements of these fine characters, all of whom have emerged over the years as truly interesting, likable people.

The last character in the modified *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* mix is Angel, a 244-year-old vampire who is attempting to make amends for his time as a murderer and consumer of human blood. Angel is played in angst-ridden, hunky fashion by David Boreanaz. Importantly, Angel was conceived as a vampire of the postmodern variety. Thus he looks more like a leather-jacket garbed gang member than a haughty European count, and he follows the interesting addiction model captured on television earlier by Geraint Wyn-Davies' characterization of hero Nick Knight on *Forever Knight*. What makes Angel's presence on *Buffy* so important is his personal relationship with the title character. As one of the above reviews indicates, the Angel/Buffy relationship elevated *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* above its comedy of contrasts and action-horror. The series really did become a kind of horror *Romeo and Juliet*, with two star-crossed lovers (one human, one vampire) trying to make things work. Accordingly, several episodes of the series played as modern tragedy when Buffy had to confront various facets of her relationship with Angel (including the fact that he would never grow old, that he could not face sunlight, and that he would lose his soul every time he had sex!).

Although Joss Whedon had created a format in which he could discuss almost any issue involving contemporary American teens, he had also invented an action-adventure world of intense martial-arts fights, where kicking-butt and comic book-style action was as important as Buffy's high school life (since it was the other facet of her two-sided life). Whedon once discussed what he was aiming for in his poetic, ballet of horror and how his characters were intended to be seen:

I invoke about five genres ... I love superheroes. I was a comic-book boy. I tend to create universes with the kind of sophomoric emotional bigness that really exists only in comic books and TV. I am very old-fashioned about heart and story. I don't watch *Seinfeld*. It's the coldest show on TV ... I don't care about these people. If I'm making the emotional connection to the person ... the person ... could be an amoeba. The show [*Buffy*] is about disenfranchisement, about the people nobody takes seriously.<sup>1</sup>

Those people that "nobody takes seriously" were proven to be valuable commodities in Sunnydale again and again, making a clear statement to teens around America that one need not conform or buckle under to be successful or proud. *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* is really television's ultimate statement about peer pressure and the (perceived) need to be like others in high school. If Xander, Buffy, or Willow were to neglect their gifts, or hide their gifts, Sunnydale would be overrun with vampires, robots, werewolves, and other ghouls many times over. Thus *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* is a positive role model for teens, despite the fact that it has sometimes been viewed (wrongly) as encouraging violence.

As this text has hopefully explained, horror television can often be a venue through which important, relevant, or illuminating comments on modern society can be forwarded without being heavy-handed or obvious. This author considers the best horror shows to be those productions which manage to be *about* something other than blood, guts, and suspense. The science versus faith didacticism of *The X-*

*Files*, the “nature of evil” study of *Millennium*, the fiercely individual *Kolchak: The Night Stalker*, the redemption study of *Brimstone*, the gadfly commentary of *Rod Serling’s Night Gallery*, the addiction model of *Forever Knight* ... these are artistic components which really elevate the quality of the genre. *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* belongs on the select “ten best of horror” list because it sneaks in relevant points about contemporary society (specifically issues revolving around adolescence and high school) in humorous and often subtle ways. For instance, the monsters of the show are rarely just monsters. Instead, they tend to represent something more than “evil”: the family interloper who wants to date Mom (“Ted”), the hypocrisy of moral watch-guards (“Gingerbread”), hidden desires released (“Doppelgangland”), abusive boyfriends (“Beauty and the Beasts”), and so forth. What this author is saying then is that Joss Whedon follows proudly in the tradition of Gene Roddenberry, Rod Serling, and Chris Carter, TV artists who take special pains to assure that their visions have relevance and importance beyond the selling of detergent or fast food. Early on, Whedon found that his social commentary was accepted, if not openly encouraged, by the venue of the show, the WB:

They [the WB network] really let me get away with murder. They get what the show is, how strange it is, how all over the place and how sometimes very edgy it is. We’ve never had a story thrown out or a real disaster ... But they do get what we’re doing, and that’s rare.<sup>2</sup>

This remark would come back to haunt Whedon in the series’ third season, when events in real life would have a disastrous impact on *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*. Before that low-point, however, *Buffy* managed to survive an abbreviated (thirteen shows) first season, and head triumphantly right into its second season. By that point, the series was garnering great reviews, and Whedon had stuck with his plan to feature a different recurring villain in each season. During the second season, the horrifying happened when Buffy had to fight her lover, Angel, who had lost his soul because of a gypsy curse. In the final show of the second season, “Becoming,” Buffy had finally worked up the courage and strength to finish off her once lover (he had already killed Ms. Calendar, Giles’ girlfriend) but at the last possible moment, Willow’s magic spell worked and Angel returned to his previous, human, self. The story, again echoing the details and feel of *Romeo and Juliet*, turned even more tragic when Buffy was forced to kill Angel anyway. Before returning to his “good” state, Angel had opened the doorway to hell and only his death, his blood, could now close it. Thus poor Buffy, a lonely teenager, had to sacrifice the one man she loved to save the world ... and TV drama does not get much bigger or tragic than that. “Becoming” won *Buffy* legions of fans, and set the stage for the third season.

*Buffy* returned in the fall of 1998 to the WB line up as part of “New Tuesday.” It aired at 8:00 P.M. and was followed by the angst-ridden college drama *Felicity* (1998– ). The season introduced a host of new elements: a new villain (Mayor Wilkins), the return of Angel from hell, college worries for the so-called Scooby Gang, and the addition of a sociopath (but oh so sexy!) vampire slayer named Faith who changed allegiances midseason to serve evil. By now, *Buffy* was the recipient of some major buzz. *TV Guide*’s critic, Matt Roush, was widely and loudly proclaiming that the show should be nominated for one or several Emmy Awards, and Sarah Michelle Gellar was heading straight to superstardom (though her 1999 features were greeted with mixed feelings: *Simply Irresistible* flopped, but *Cruel Intentions* hit).

While *Buffy* was riding high from its best season yet, however, tragedy struck. Far away, in Littleton, Colorado, at an affluent high school called Columbine, a duo of high school-age crazies who called themselves “The Trenchcoat Mafia” went on a killing spree. The bloody event became major news in America, and the Republican Party, realizing that it would suffer pretty dire consequences if

Americans finally focused in on its right-wing ties with the National Rifle Association and its never-ending push for unlimited gun availability, launched a counter-offensive at Hollywood, films, and TV. Yes, the reactionary political party which claims that they want *less* government involvement in all matters hypocritically came forward to push for heavy government involvement in what Americans see on their TV and movie screens. Sadly, *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* was a casualty of this political war, as it was the only high school horror show on the air at the time. Under pressure from various moral watchdogs, the WB pulled “Earshot” out of *Buffy*’s episode roster, fearing its guns and school theme would be misperceived as “encouraging” violence in teens. Worse than that, the final episode of the third season arc, “Graduation Day, Part II,” was also yanked before broadcast. The latter decision was especially ridiculous, as the episode featured high school students of *all* cliques working together to quash the villainous mayor’s ascension. Yes, the students were armed (with torches and crossbows, for heaven’s sake!) but the message of teamwork was a very positive one that only Henry Hyde, Orrin Hatch, and their ilk could be dull-witted enough to misinterpret. As is usual, politicians picked the wrong target, and *Buffy* fans suffered the consequences of a witchhunt (similar to the one that the episode “Gingerbread” had dramatized the very same season!).

The Columbine incident’s political fall-out effectively ruined *Buffy*’s season-long, suspenseful build to a terrific, heartfelt conclusion. Fortunately, it will not happen again: *Buffy* is going away to college and the “dangerous” high school years of its development are now over. Still, this censorship incident again points to the fact that some people in Washington, D.C., want to control what others watch, and tend to lump all horror together as “bad” while lauding sophomoric melodrama such as *Touched by An Angel* and *7th Heaven* as “good” Christian entertainment. If just one of the loud-mouthed conservative “moral watch-guards” sat down and watched two or three episodes of *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, they might realize what a good, solid role-model it is for teens.

This author has always believed that art imitates life, not vice versa, but many in Washington would rather blame shows like *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* for incidents such as Columbine or Jonesboro than look at the root causes of such crimes: parental neglect and the easy availability of powerful firearms. The WB, whom Whedon had once asserted was being quite supportive of *Buffy*, had responded to the Columbine incident with what Matt Roush called “too much sensitivity.” *Buffy* was never the problem. Ever.

“Graduation Day, Part II” finally aired July 13, 1999, almost a full two months after its scheduled airdate in May. “Earshot” was held back even longer, more than four months, until September 21, 1999. Despite being at the center of a political nightmare, *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* did not close out 1999 in shame or under a cloud. On the contrary, fans were buoyed by the announcement that a spin-off from the show called *Angel* would appear in the fall of ’99, starring Boreanaz and Carpenter. Although some fans worried that the removal of *Angel* and Cordelia from the *Buffy* format would spell trouble for the show, others looked forward to what Whedon promised would be a darker peek into the *Buffy* universe, set in nighttime Los Angeles.

Already a television classic that has inspired one knock-off (the inferior WB show *Charmed* [1998– ]), *Buffy* and *Angel* landed for a new season on October 5, 1999. They are scheduled back-to-back, so fans could get a healthy helping of Joss Whedon’s literate, funny, and endearing horror masterpiece. Perhaps it was Sarah Michelle Gellar, *Buffy* herself, who once described the show’s appeal in the most elegant, and simple, terms:

What I like about the show is that it reminds you it’s O.K. to be different. What people think isn’t

necessary true. If people walk away with half of that, we've done our job.<sup>3</sup>

## CRITICAL COMMENTARY

Joss Whedon's *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, along with *The X-Files* and *Millennium*, may just be the best reason to watch network television as America approaches the 21st century. Though some closed-minded people may *never* take this show seriously simply because of its quasi-comedic title, *Buffy* is nonetheless a terrific excursion into terror TV, and one video voyage that is very different from the popular imaginings of Chris Carter. In a world of *The X-Files*' clones (from *Nowhere Man* and *Strange Luck* to *The Burning Zone* and *Dark Skies*), *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* is perhaps the only horror show on the air with such a high degree of originality, and its own distinctive mo-jo. It cares little about scientific explanations, or the world of rationality and enlightenment. After all, what does the high school experience have to do with reality or enlightenment?

A real (and constant) joy of *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* is its witty, razor-sharp dialogue, which is deployed not just for laughs, but to succinctly and efficiently build and reveal character. Xander's reluctant heroism is spotlighted in "The Witch" when he states, straight-faced: "I laugh in the face of danger ... then I run and hide." Cordelia's innate insensitivity and selfishness is expressed through any number of funny lines, but her best quip may be the withering interrogative she first levels at Buffy in "Welcome to the Hellmouth": "God!? What is *your* childhood trauma?!" Faith's lack of conscience and abuse of slayer power is perfectly captured through her three word manifesto, heard in "Bad Girls" "Want ... take ... have." Epitomizing his sensitivity and dignity, Giles is told at one point in "Helpless," that he has a "father's love for the girl" (meaning Buffy). There could be no better a description of this character. The dialogue of *Buffy* is wonderfully individual, a far cry from other cookie-cutter lines on most shows.

The marvelous Buffy uses language to reveal much about herself. Her insecurity about returning to school is the focus in "Dead Man's Party" when she brings up home schooling, stating that it isn't "just for scary religious people anymore." Her love for Angel is almost tangible in "The Prom" when she earnestly declares that "I want my life to be with you," and so forth. For a would-be vapid mall-chick, Buffy manipulates the English language like a pro ... and it works beautifully for this show.

Even the villains are given brilliant dialogue to utter on this series. In "Gingerbread," Buffy's mother is possessed by the spirits of Hansel and Gretel and she suddenly becomes a moral-guardian, a "reactionary" to all the violence in society. The ridiculous nature (and slippery slope) of censorship is revealed when Ms. Summers states, solemnly, of the school library: "Any student could waltz in there and get any kind of ideas!" Indeed, some people might even say that ideas are a library's stock and trade! But as Buffy's mother inadvertently reveals, some people think that ideas are dangerous and should be controlled. Other examples are equally witty. A malfunctioning, 1950s robot weaned on *Father Knows Best* backhands Buffy and then asks her "How about a nice game of Parcheesi?" in "Ted." Of her monstrous, abusive boyfriend in "Beauty and the Beasts," a teenager named Debbie states: "It's not his fault. He's not himself when he gets this way. It's nothing ... it's me. I make him crazy." Talk about a perfect encapsulation of the enabling, victim mentality! Thus the writing, particularly the dialogue, of *Buffy* is clever and purposeful, a far cry from most TV dramas, where boring exposition is mixed with tepid lines lacking motivation, a voice, or even a degree of charm.

Delightfully, *Buffy* is also savagely sharp-witted in its visual jokes (which also build character)! In "Bad Girls," the evil mayor (played by Harry Groener) who is hoping to soon ascend to full

demonhood, opens his office closet casually. Inside are skulls, weapons, and occult items of all varieties ... as well as a box of Wet Naps! Not surprisingly, the same episode features this prissy villain checking off a “to do” list which features the odd task of “becoming invincible” alongside such mundane tasks as “pick up laundry” and “write speech.” Simply put, this show is a riot. And, though its villains are sometimes treated with humor, they never lose their sense of menace. This mayor is not only funny, and scary, he is touching. In “Graduation Day, Part II” his one weakness, which Buffy capitalizes on, is his affection for Faith. On *Buffy*, even the evil sometimes feel love.

Rather than taking *The X-Files* approach of leveling social commentary at a variety of interesting topics, *Buffy* restricts its conscience, its voice, to a smaller playing field, specifically the issues involved with growing up, with the teen set. “Ted” captures perfectly the conflicting feelings a child of a single parent might experience when a new, would-be spouse enters the picture and begins to date Mom. Buffy dislikes Ted (guest John Ritter, in a hysterical guest role) not only because she feels like she is being replaced, but because she suddenly feels inferior to and less important than this nurturing, charming interloper in her family unit. It does not help Buffy to accept Ted, of course, that he is a chauvinist, Stepford Dad robot bent on creating a perfect 1950s household. “Reptile Boy” finds a metaphor for fraternity parties, date rape, and hazing by imagining a very special fraternity which is actually a cult. The cult members, all good looking college athletes and studs, drug, capture, and nearly sacrifice Cordelia and Buffy to a hungry Snake God who promises them success in their careers. Talk about moving with a fast crowd! Likewise, “The Witch” dramatizes how nostalgic parents sometimes attempt to recapture their glory days and reexperience their high school years when a nasty witch usurps her daughter’s body and tries out for the cheerleading squad!

On *Buffy*, this supernatural road map to the process of growing up just keeps becoming more interesting, and more complex. In “Invisible Girl,” an unpopular student who feels ignored *literally* becomes invisible after being metaphorically invisible to her classmates for years. In “Band Candy,” adults regress and become teenagers, and the young protagonists are allowed to see how their erratic behavior might look from an adult perspective. At the same time, the adult cast members are reminded what it is like to be carefree, a little less uptight. Indeed, no aspect of modern high school life has been left unexamined on *Buffy*, much to the show’s credit.

To wit: student rights and censorship inform “Gingerbread.” That the once open-ended future might be limited because of identity and choices is a subject broached in “Lover’s Walk.” Postsex brush-offs are the underlying subject of “Surprise” and “Innocence,” wherein Angel has intercourse with Buffy and then promptly loses his soul. Youthful indiscretions like alcohol and drugs find a supernatural analogy in “The Dark Age” when Giles reveals his wild adolescence and a kind of “high” that involves dangerous demonic possession. The aforementioned “Beauty and the Beasts” is about abusive relationships and the people who stay in them for lack of self-esteem, but in this case, the “bad” boyfriend is a Dr. Jekyll/Mr. Hyde character transformed by a chemical reaction. “Go Fish” rigorously explores several teen-oriented topics: the use of steroids in high school athletics (which in this case transforms the Sunnydale swim team into sea monsters), the “win” mentality of high school authorities such as coaches, and even the special treatment that athletes receive because of their physical prowess and the trophies they bring home. On top of all that, “Go Fish” is an off-kilter homage to “B” sea monster movies of the 1950s and ’60s such as *The Horror of Party Beach* (1964) and *The Creature from the Black Lagoon* (1954), as well as more recent water-based horror fare like *Jaws* (1975) and *Humanoids from the Deep* (1980). The competitive nature of high school life is bemoaned in “Homecoming,” an episode in which Buffy and Cordelia wage an all-out war to win the

coveted title of Homecoming Queen. As Buffy warns her opponent, “you’ve awakened the Prom Queen within.” Impressively, the Cordelia/Buffy competition is mirrored with a slayer rivalry (Buffy and Faith) and with the “Baddies” of the week, a troop of bounty hunters who are competing against one another for the honor of killing Buffy. Other *Buffy*’s are just as interesting and as artful. The episodes deal with teen pregnancy (“Bad Eggs”), balancing responsibilities (“Never Kill a Boy on the First Date”), and even the good girl who wishes she could be bad (“Doppelgangland”). The final episode of the third season, “Graduation Day,” issues the show’s ultimate statement on high school life when the joyous graduates and heroes proclaim, emphatically, “*We survived.*” They are referring not just to their war with evil, but the entire high school experience. So on *Buffy*, high school equals terror. Anyone who has lived through high school and wondered if survival was a possibility knows just how potent this series equation really is.

The very worst thing this reviewer could do is to leave readers with the impression that *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* is like some whacked out *Afterschool Special*, filled with “messages.” That is simply not so. First and foremost, *Buffy* is a rock ’em sock ’em action/horror series. What makes it great is simply that it uses the language of horror (vampires, werewolves, humanoids from the deep) not just to titillate or scare, but to make relevant points about a turbulent period of life that everyone must face. Because high school is a universal experience, *Buffy* is not quite the “feminist” show that some critics have called it. It is true that Buffy is a woman, and that Joss Whedon writes women extraordinarily well. However, *Buffy* is really post-feminist because sexual identity is not the main issue of the show. *Buffy* is a very beautiful, very sensitive woman, and she is also a hero. The show does not question that fact or make allowances or pronouncements based on Buffy’s sex. *Buffy* is a humanist drama about a universal experience.

As for the horror elements of this series, well, they could not be better. This is *not* the metaphysical, fin de siècle horror of *Millennium*, the straight-faced scientific horror of *The X-Files* or the “bad trip” hallucination horror of *Twin Peaks*. Instead it is, as Whedon has asserted, comic book horror: fun scares coupled with a comedic flair. Still, *Buffy* manages to be quite scary when that is its end goal. In “Bad Eggs,” a skittering parasite breaks out of an egg shell and hides under Buffy’s bed. As Buffy looks for the wee beastie, it attacks! As is appropriate for a series toiling in youthful fears, “Bad Eggs” exploits the notion that a monster can hide in our closets, or even under our beds. When Buffy spikes the damn thing with a pair of scissors, the monster is dead, but the lingering fear of what is hidden “down there” remains.

Other horror imagery in *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* manages to be a bit more adult, and a lot more disturbing from a psychological standpoint. In “The Prom,” Buffy has a dream of her wedding to Angel. It is a vision of a future that can never be, and as the happy couple exits triumphantly from the church, a radiant Buffy, garbed in stunning white wedding gown, suddenly catches fire and burns away to ashes. This image is powerful on a variety of levels. First, it is tragedy because there will *never* be a wedding between vampire and vampire slayer, and thus there is a feeling of longing and sadness associated with the image. Secondly, the dream represents the destruction of a day that all youngsters look forward to with great anticipation: their wedding day. That “special” day when a love between two people is sealed for eternity by splendor and ceremony is thus ruined for Buffy here.

Most disturbingly, the dream climaxes with an ironic reversal: it is not Buffy who should be scorched in the harsh glare of sunlight, it is the undead Angel, a vampire! Yet it is clear why Buffy imagines herself dying instead of her lover. Her death, her destruction, is imminent because she is, despite her

gifts, mortal. The plain fact is that Angel will be young and beautiful long after his lovely bride is literally ashes ... cremated after her death. The dream sequence in "The Prom" is not only about what Buffy can never have (a happy life with Angel), it is about what she knows *will* be: her own mortal end while Angel goes on, forever young.

Do not let the title of this series fool you or keep you from sampling it. *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* is certainly one of the three or four best horror series produced in the last thirty years. Its conscientious focus on high school and teen issues gives it admirable cohesion, its cast is uniformly wonderful (but Gellar is *especially* good), and the comic book horror and action is more fun than any game in town. Accept no substitutes (because they might be giant praying mantises in disguise)!

## CAST AND CREDITS

*Cast:* Sarah Michelle Gellar (Buffy Summers); Nicholas Brendan (Xander Harris); Alyson Hannigan (Willow Rosenberg); Charisma Carpenter (Cordelia Chase); Anthony Stewart Head (Rupert Giles); David Boreanaz (Angel); Seth Green (Oz).

*Credits:* *Created by:* Joss Whedon. *Executive Producer:* Joss Whedon. *Score:* Walter Murphy. *Theme:* Nerf Herder. *Editors (various episodes):* Christopher Cooke, Regis B. Kimble, Geoffrey Rowland, Skip Schoolnik. *Production Designer:* Steve Hardie. *Director of Photography:* Michael Gershman. *Co-Producer:* David Solomon. *Producer:* Gareth Davies. *Executive Producers:* Sandy Gallin, Gail Berman, Fran Rubel Kuzui, Kaz Kuzui. *Co-Executive Producer:* David Greenwalt. *Story Editors:* Matt Kiene, Joe Reinkemeyer, Robert Des Hotel, Dean Batali. *Unit Production Manager/Co-Producer:* Joseph M. Ellis. *First Assistant Director:* David D'Ovidio, Brenda Kalosh. *Second Assistant Director:* Mark Hanson. *Casting:* Marcia Shulman. *Costume Designer:* Susanna Puisto. *Art Director:* Carey Meyer. *Set Decorator:* David Koneff. *Leadman:* Gustav Gustafson. *Construction Coordinator:* Daniel Turk. *Property Master:* Ken Wilson. *Chief Lighting Technician:* Larry Kaster. *Key Grip:* Tom Keefer. *Camera Operator:* Russ McElhatton. *Script Supervisor:* Lesley King. *Production Sound Mixer:* David Kirshner. *Production Coordinator:* Susan Ellis. *Assistant Production Coordinator:* Claudia Alves. *Production Auditor:* Edwin L. Perez. *Assistant to Joss Whedon:* George Snyder. *Assistant to David Greenwalt:* Robert Price. *Assistant to Gareth Davies:* Marc D. Alpert. *Stunt Coordinator:* Jeff Smolek. *Transportation Coordinator:* Robert Ellis. *Location Manager:* Jordana Kronen. *Costume Supervisor:* Rita Salazar. *Makeup Artist:* Todd McIntosh. *Hair-Stylist:* Jeri Baker. *Post-production Coordinator:* Jahmani Perry. *Assistant Editor:* Kristopher Lease, Golda Savage. *Post-production Sound:* Todd-AO Studio. *Supervising Sound Editor:* Cindy Rabideau. *Re-Recording Mixers:* Kevin Patrick Burns, Jon Taylor, Todd Keith Orr. *Music Editor:* Celia Weiner. *Special Makeup Effects Created by:* John Vulich, Optic Nerve Studios. *Visual Effects Support:* Glen Campbell. *CGI Animation:* Scott Wheeler. *Main Title Design:* Montgomery/Coss. *Processing:* 4MC. *Post-production Services Provided by:* Digital Magic. *Presented by:* Mutant Enemy, in association with Kuzui Enterprises, Sandollar Television, 20th Century-Fox Television.

## EPISODE GUIDE

### • *First Season (1997)*

**1. "Welcome to the Hellmouth" (Part I)** Written by Joss Whedon; Directed by Charles Martin Smith; airdate: March 10, 1997; *Guest Cast:* Mark Metcalf (The Master); Brian Thompson (Luke); Ken Lerner (Principal Flutie); Kristine Sutherland (Mrs. Summers); Julie Benz (Darla); J. Patrick

Lawlor (Thomas); Eric Balfour (Jesse); Natalie Strause (Teacher); Mercedes McNab (Harmony); Amy Chance, Tupelo Jereme, Persia White, Deborah Brown (Girls); Jeffrey Steven Smith (Guy in Computer Class); Teddy Lane Jr. (Bouncer); Carmine D. Giovinazzo (Boy).

Buffy, the Chosen One, arrives at Sunnydale High School, which sits on an evil mystical portal called the Hellmouth. There have been a rash of killings lately, and a student turns up dead in the school gym, a victim of a vampire attack. Buffy's new watcher, British librarian Rupert Giles, fears a major mystical upheaval will soon occur, but Buffy just wants to be a regular girl, *not* a vampire slayer. On her first night in town, Buffy meets a dark stranger named Angel who warns her about the Hellmouth, and a frightening supernatural event called "the Harvest."

**2. "Welcome to the Hellmouth" (Part II, aka "The Harvest")** Written by Joss Whedon; Directed by John Kretchmer; airdate: March 10, 1997; *Guest Cast:* Mark Metcalf (The Master); Brian Thompson (Luke); Ken Lerner (Principal Flutie); Kristine Sutherland (Mrs. Summers); Julie Benz (Darla); Eric Balfour (Jesse).

Buffy teams up with geek Xander, computer expert and "Brain" Willow, and librarian Rupert Giles to rescue their friend Jesse from the grasp of the Master, an ancient vampire/demon who hopes to "ascend" to a position of power during the Harvest. In the underground tunnels beneath the school, Jesse is revealed to be a vampire, and Buffy and Xander seek escape. Later, the Master's vessel, Luke, and his minions attack party-goers at the Bronze in an effort to claim more souls for the Master and thereby open the door to the Hellmouth. Buffy and friends rush to a confrontation which could end in the subjugation and termination of the human race.

**3. "The Witch"** Written by Dana Reston; Directed by Stephen Cragg; airdate: March 17, 1997; *Guest Cast:* Kristine Sutherland (Joyce Summers); Elizabeth Anne Allen (Amy Madison); Robin Riker (Catherine "The Great" Madison); Jim Doughan (Mr. Pole); Nicole Prescott (Lishanne); Amanda Wilmshurst (Senior Cheerleader); William Monaghan (Dr. Gregory).

Giles is upset when Buffy tries out for the Sunnydale High cheerleader squad because he fears her attention will be diverted from slaying, but things take an uglier turn when a popular cheerleader almost spontaneously combusts during a rehearsal. While Buffy and the gang contemplate this bizarre incident, Buffy realizes that her relationship with her mother is not as close as that of friend Amy and her mother, a woman who was once a very popular cheerleader herself. When Amy fails to make the cheerleading squad, her mother retaliates with witchcraft and even blinds Cordelia with a nasty spell. Soon, cheerleaders are dropping like flies and Buffy is the next target.

**4. "Teacher's Pet"** Written by David Greenwalt; Directed by Bruce Seth Green; airdate: March 25, 1997; *Guest Cast:* Ken Lerner (Principal Flutie); Musetta Vander (Ms. French); Jackson Price (Blayne); Jean Speegle Howard (Old Ms. French); William Monaghan (Dr. Gregory); Jack Knight (Homeless Person); Michael Robb Verona (Teacher); Karim Oliver (Bud #1).

Sunnydale's newest substitute (science) teacher is also Sunnydale's newest creature: a walking-talking praying mantis who murdered the regular biology teacher. Xander starts falling for Mrs. French, even as other boys who have been seen with her start to vanish. Xander loses his virginity, but finds that his lover is a monster.

**5. "Never Kill a Boy on the First Date"** Written by Rob Des Hotel and Dean Batali; Directed by



David Semel; airdate: March 31, 1997; *Guest Cast*: Mark Metcalf (The Master); Christopher Wiehl (Owen Thurman); Geoff Meed (Man on Bus); Robert Mont (Van Driver); Andrew J. Ferchland (Boy/The Anointed One).

The Master hatches another plan to further the aims of evil, this time by enlisting the services of a supernatural warrior called the Anointed One, who it is written can lead the Slayer to hell. Meanwhile, Buffy goes out with Owen, an Emily Dickinson fan and high school hunk. As Buffy attempts to balance her job responsibilities as a slayer and the demands of her social life, the Order of Aurelius works to resurrect the Anointed One ... a resurrection which can only come about through the deaths of five innocent people.

**6. “The Pack”** Written by Matt Kiene and Joe Reinkmeyer; Directed by Bruce Seth Green; airdate: April 7, 1997; *Guest Cast*: Ken Lerner (Principal Flutie); Jeff Maynard (Lance); James Stephens (The Zookeeper); David Brisbin (Mr. Anderson); Barbara K. Whinnery (Mrs. Anderson); Gregory White (Coach Herrold); Justin Jon Ross (Joey); Jeffrey Steven Smith (Adam); Paltrese Borem (Young Woman); Eion Bailey, Michael McRaine, Brian Gross, Jennifer Sky (The Pack).

A field trip goes bad for Buffy’s class when a bunch of the boys become inhabited by wild animal spirits. Even Xander is affected by the vicious “pack” mentality in Sunnydale, and it is up to Buffy to save her friend and stop the wilding spree in her high school. Among the victims of “the pack” are Principal Flutie and the school mascot.

**7. “Angel”** Written by David Greenwalt; Directed by Scott Brazil; airdate: April 14, 1997; *Guest Cast*: Mark Metcalf (The Master); Kristine Sutherland (Joyce Summers); Julie Benz (Darla); Andrew J. Ferchland (Collin/The Anointed One); Charles Wesley (Meanest Vampire).

The Anointed One is not really dead: he is a boy, a child, who is destined to lead an unknowing Buffy straight to hell. Meanwhile, Buffy starts to develop an attraction to the mysterious Angel, especially after he saves her life from three warrior vampires of an ancient caste. As Angel starts to reciprocate Buffy’s feelings, she learns that he is actually a 240-year-old vampire who has been cursed with a soul, which means that he feels remorse and regret for all his evil actions. The Master sends vampire bitch Darla to kill Buffy’s Mom, but Buffy becomes convinced that Angel, who was invited into her home, is actually the attacker.

**8. “I Robot—You Jane”** Written by Ashley Gable and Thomas A Swyden; Directed by Stephen Posey; airdate: April 28, 1997; *Guest Cast*: Robia La Morte (Jenny Calendar); Chad Lindberg (Dave); Jamison Ryan (Fritz); Pierrino Mascarino (Thelonius); Edith Fields (School Nurse); Damon Sharp (Male Student); Mark Deakins (Moloch).

The naive Willow has made friends with a boy over the Internet, but in this case, she has really accessed the chat room from hell. A demonic creature called Moloch has been conjured up from Giles’ library and is now in the Sunnydale high computer system, working towards murderous and deadly ends. In the end, Buffy is forced to put Willow’s would-be love, a seven-foot-tall robot predator, on the scrap heap.

**9. “The Puppet Show”** Written by Dean Batali and Rob Des Hotel; Directed by Ellen Pressman; airdate: May 5, 1997; *Guest Cast*: Kristine Sutherland (Joyce Summers); Richard Werner (Morgan); Burke Roberts (Marc); Armin Shimerman (Principal Snyder); Lenora May (Mrs. Jackson); Chasen

Hampton (Elliot); Natasha Pearce (Lisa); Tom Wyner (Sid); Krissy Carlson (Emily/Dancer); Michelle Miracle (Locker Girl).

Giles is forced to run the High School Talent(less) Show, much to the amusement of Buffy, Willow, and Xander. New school principal Snyder has the last laugh, however, when he forces the trio to participate in the show as well. Little do these new “talents” realize that they will be sharing the stage with Sid, a very lively and quite terrifying ventriloquist’s dummy who desires to be “Flesh.” Worse, the dummy believes that by murdering Buffy, a girl of great strength and power, he can accomplish this goal.

**10. “Nightmares”** Story by Joss Whedon; Written by David Greenwalt; Directed by Bruce Seth Green; airdate: May 12, 1997; *Guest Cast:* Mark Metcalf (The Master); Kristine Sutherland (Joyce Summers); Jeremy Foley (Billy Palmer); Andrew J. Ferchland (Collin); Dean Butler (Hank Summers); Justin Urich (Wendell); J. Robin Miller (Laura); Terry Cain (Ms. Tishler); Scott Harlan (Aldo Gianfranco); Brian Pietro (Coach); Johnny Green (Way Cool Guy); Patty Ross (Cool Guy’s Mom); Dom Magwili (Doctor); Sean Moran (Stage Manager).

Sunnydale is going to hell, literally, when dreams and nightmares start to supplant everyday reality. A killer clown, a collection of nerds, a day without clothes, a fear of vampires, the death of loved ones, a fear of responsibility—these are the subconscious images manipulated for evil purposes by a hidden villain. Buffy’s friendship with a youngster may be the key to this world gone crazy, but her own fears could jeopardize the entire town’s future.

**11. “Invisible Girl”** Story by Joss Whedon; Written by Ashley Gable and Thomas A. Swyden; Directed by Reza Badiyi; airdate: May 19, 1997; *Guest Cast:* Clea Duvall (Marcie Ross); Armin Shimerman (Principal Snyder); Ryan Bittle (Mitch); Denise Dowse (Ms. Miller); John Knight (Bud #1); Mercedes McNab (Harmony); Mark Phelan (Agent Doyle); Skip Stellrecht (Agent Manetti); Julie Fulton (FBI Teacher).

A lonely, unpopular girl at Sunnydale High becomes an unexpected menace when she recedes into the woodwork, becoming invisible to others. The popular crowd takes it on the chin from the invisible Marcie as she wreaks revenge for all the licks she has taken in high school over the years. Buffy and friends must put their own wounds aside to help Cordelia’s clique before the battle between the snobby and the transparent turns fatal—with the ultra-snooty Cordelia the ultimate target.

**12. “Prophecy Girl”** Written and directed by Joss Whedon; airdate: June 2, 1997; *Guest Cast:* Mark Metcalf (The Master); Kristine Sutherland (Mrs. Joyce Summers); Robia La Morte (Jenny Calendar); Andrew J. Ferchland (Collin); Scott Gurney (Kevin).

Giles comes across a disturbing prophecy in one of his texts: the Slayer is to be murdered by the villainous head vampire, The Master. Buffy learns of her unpleasant fate as Xander contemplates asking her to an important spring dance. To the dismay of all her friends in school, the prophecy comes true as Buffy is killed by the Master.

• *Second Season (1997–1998)*

**13. “When She Was Bad”** Written and directed by Joss Whedon; airdate: September 15, 1997; *Guest Cast:* Kristine Sutherland (Joyce Summers); Dean Butler (Hank Summers); Robia La Morte (Jenny

Calendar); Andrew J. Ferchland (Collin); Tamra Braun (Tara); Armin Shimerman (Principal Snyder); Brent Jennings (Absalom).

After being revived from the dead and going off for a summer vacation, Buffy the Vampire Slayer of Sunnydale returns to high school with a sizable chip on her shoulder. At the same time, evil forces attempt to revive the dead Master for one more go round with the Chosen One. If Buffy cannot get her act together in time, the evil she conquered once will return to rule the day.

**14. “Some Assembly Required”** Written by Ty King; Directed by Bruce Seth Green; airdate: September 22, 1997; *Guest Cast:* Robia La Morte (Jenny Calendar); Michael Bacall (Eric); Angelo Spizzirri (Chris); Ingo Neuhaus (Daryl); Melanie MacQueen (Mrs. Epps); Amanda Wilmshurst (Cheerleader).

Grave robbing is the activity of the week as a modern day Frankenstein (and fellow high school student) starts to assemble a bride for his dead brother, who has also been brought back from the dead out of spare parts. While Giles romances computer teacher Mrs. Calendar, Buffy investigates the disappearance of several cheerleader body parts ... and comes upon the deadly Frankenstein scenario. Can she stop the evil before Cordelia becomes part of the mix-n-match bride of a modern Frankenstein?

**15. “School Hard”** Written by David Greenwalt; Directed by John Kretchmer; airdate: September 29, 1997; *Guest Cast:* Kristine Sutherland (Joyce Summers); Robia La Morte (Jenny Calendar); Andrew J. Ferchland (The Anointed One); James Marsters (Spike); Juliet Landau (Drusilla); Alexandra Johns (Sheila); Armin Shimerman (Principal Snyder); Alan Abelew (Brian Kirch); Keith MacKechnie (Parent); Joanie Pleasant (Helpless Girl).

Two new vampires come to Sunnydale: the punk rocker Spike and his evil lover, the bizarre and sometimes psychic Drusilla. While Buffy works to bring off parent-teacher night at school to raise her grade point average, the Anointed One joins forces with Spike and Drusilla to kill the Slayer who offed the Master. Before long, Spike and his minions have attacked the school on parent-teacher night and Buffy must not only save the day, but keep her secret identity as the Chosen One from her mother.

**16. “Inca Mummy Girl”** Written by Matt Kiene and Joe Reinkemeyer; Directed by Ellen Pressman; airdate: October 6, 1997; *Guest Cast:* Kristine Sutherland (Joyce Summers); Ara Celi (Ampata/Mummy); Samuel Jacobs (Peruvian Boy); Kristen Winnicki (Gwen); Jason Hall (Devon); Gil Birmingham (Peru Man); Henrik Rosvall (Sven); Joey Crawford (Rodney); Danny Strong (Jonathan).

Xander falls in love again, this time with a vicious Peruvian mummy masquerading as an exchange student. The mummy, once a slayer in her own culture, must kill to stay alive and she commits her misdeeds with a deadly kiss, of all things. Now Buffy must save Xander from a fate worse than death, but in the final battle, it is Xander who ends up doing the saving.

**17. “Reptile Boy”** Written and directed by David Greenwalt; airdate: October 13, 1997; *Guest Cast:* Todd Babcock (Tom Warner); Greg Vaughan (Richard); Jordana Spiro (Callie).

Cordelia is dating a fraternity boy with a dark secret: his brotherhood is sacrificing high school girls to a reptilian, subterranean demon called Makita. Buffy joins Cordelia at a frat party after she and

Angel have a fight, and learns the unpleasant truth about this fraternity. Xander crashes the party and is mistaken for a new pledge at the same time Buffy is drugged by the boys of Delta Zeta Kappa and lined up to be sacrificed.

**18. “Halloween”** Written by Carl Ellsworth; Directed by Bruce Seth Green; airdate: October 27, 1997; *Guest Cast:* James Marsters (Spike); Juliet Landau (Drusilla); Armin Shimerman (Principal Snyder); Robin Sachs (Ethan).

Halloween is supposed to be a slow night for Buffy and Sunnydale because vampires tend to stay in, but this year turns out to be anything but quiet. An evil spell which invokes the name of Janus, the two-faced Roman god, changes the identities of the trick-or-treaters to match the costumes they are wearing. Xander, in fatigues, becomes a macho soldier; Willow, as a ghost, becomes an apparition, and Buffy, in 1770s gown, becomes a shrinking violet. Normally, such a switch would be a nuisance but not fatal, yet on this Halloween, Spike is on the prowl, and the services of a slayer are desperately required.

**19. “Lie to Me”** Written and directed by Joss Whedon; airdate: November 3, 1997; *Guest Cast:* Robia La Morte (Jenny Calendar); James Marsters (Spike); Juliet Landau (Drusilla); Jason Behr (Billy Fordham); Jarrad Paul (Marvin Diego); Julia Lee (Chanterella); Will Rothhaar (James).

An old flame of Buffy’s named Billy “Ford” Fordham comes to Sunnydale to rekindle the affair, but in secret he is planning to give Buffy’s life to Spike in exchange for the immortal life of a vampire. Angel and Willow suspect that something is not right with “Ford,” and attempt to convince Buffy that her old boyfriend has ulterior motives. As it turns out, Billy is dying of a terminal illness and he thinks that vampirism is his only chance to outlive the disease growing inside him.

**20. “The Dark Age”** Written by Dean Batali and Rob Des Hotel; Directed by Bruce Seth Green; airdate: November 10, 1997; *Guest Cast:* Robia La Morte (Jenny Calendar); Robin Sachs (Ethan Rayne); Wendy Way (Dierdre Page); Stuart McLean (Philip Henry); Michael Earl Reid (Custodian); Tony Sears (Morgue Attendant); Daniel Henry Murray (Creepy Cult Guy); John Bellucci (Man).

Giles’ youthful indiscretions come back to haunt him when he learns that many of his friends in London, and one here in the U.S., are being killed. As it turns out, Giles experimented with demonic possession when he was an adolescent, and the same demon he once conjured is now jumping bodies and killing his friends ... while simultaneously framing him for the crimes. Before long, the demon has entered the body of Giles’ lover, Mrs. Calendar. Buffy and her friends must find a way to clear Giles of any suspicion, and save Ms. Calendar before it is too late.

**21. “What’s My Line?” (Part I)** Written by Marti Noxon and Howard Gordon; Directed by David Solomon; airdate: November 17, 1997; *Guest Cast:* James Marsters (Spike); Juliet Landau (Drusilla); Armin Shimerman (Principal Snyder); Eric Sait (Dalton); Bianca Lawson (Kendra); Norman Pfister (Kelly Connell); Michael Rothhaar (Suitman); P.B. Hutton (Mr. Kalish).

Buffy is depressed during career week because her “job” has already been chosen without her consent: she is the slayer, always and forever. Willow’s future options look considerably brighter, but even that bit of good news cannot cure Buffy’s blues, especially when Spike summons a group of bounty hunters to kill her. Just when things look like they can’t get any worse, a new arrival in town changes the status quo: Kendra, a fellow vampire slayer.

**22. “What’s My Line?” (Part II)** Written by Marti Noxon; Directed by David Semel; airdate: November 24, 1997; *Guest Cast:* James Marsters (Spike); Juliet Landau (Drusilla); Bianca Lawson (Kendra); Saverio Guerra (Willy); Danny Strong (Hostage Kid); Spice Williams (Patrice).

Kendra, the vampire slayer, has come to Sunnydale to replace Buffy, who actually “died” during her confrontation with the Master some time back. Angel is captured by Drusilla and Spike and is to be fodder in a ritual which will cure the sick Dru forever. Buffy feels useless, now that her skills are redundant, and even grows jealous as Giles and Kendra form a bond which threatens Buffy’s own relationship with her watcher. Buffy must save Angel before she loses him forever.

**23. “Ted”** Written by David Greenwalt and Joss Whedon; Directed by Bruce Seth Green; airdate: December 8, 1997; *Guest Cast:* Kristine Sutherland (Joyce Summers); Robia La Morte (Jenny Calendar); John Ritter (Ted Buchanan); James G. MacDonald (Detective Stein); Ken Thorley (Neal); Jeff Langton (Vampire).

Buffy has trouble coping with her mother’s smarmy new boyfriend, Ted. Making matters worse, everyone else seems to love the guy, a salesman and computer wiz. Ted shows his true colors to Buffy at a miniature golf game, proving to be an uptight, controlling, disciplinarian ... but no one believes her. Ted and Buffy come to blows over their different approaches to domestic bliss, and Ted is believed dead until revealed to be a malfunctioning robot.

**24. “Bad Eggs”** Written by Marti Noxon; Directed by David Greenwalt; airdate: January 12, 1998; *Guest Cast:* Kristine Sutherland (Joyce Summers); Jeremy Ratchford (Lyle Gorch); James Parks (Tector Gorch); Rick Zeiff (Mr. Whitmore); Danny Strong (Jonathan).

Buffy’s mother thinks Buffy needs a lesson in responsibility, and Sunnydale high’s health teacher, Mr. Whitmore, comes up with a plan: Buffy and all her classmates will each take care of an offspring, an egg, and treat it like a human baby for a week. Unfortunately, these are no ordinary eggs, and each one contains a deadly parasitic lifeform which can control a human host through a process called “neural clamping.” The parasites serve a larger, prehistoric mother organism which dwells beneath the school and is enslaving the human populace of Sunnydale.

**25. “Surprise”** Written by Marti Noxon; Directed by Michael Lange; airdate: January 19, 1998; *Guest Cast:* Kristine Sutherland (Joyce Summers); Robia La Morte (Jenny Calendar); Brian Thompson (The Judge); Vincent Schiavelli (Jenny’s Uncle); James Marsters (Spike); Juliet Landau (Drusilla); Eric Salet (Dalton).

Buffy contemplates consummating her relationship with Angel, with all the angst that goes along with the decision to have sex. Meanwhile, Drusilla and Spike are up to their old tricks, planning once more to off the slayer. Buffy and Angel finally sleep together, but something awful is borne of their union.

**26. “Innocence”** Written and directed by Joss Whedon; airdate: January 20, 1998; *Guest Cast:* Ryan Francis (Soldier); James Lurie (Teacher); Parry Shen (Student); Carla Madden (Woman).

Angel loses his soul after one night of love with Buffy, and one moment of pure happiness. This horrible event is a result of an ancient gypsy curse, but it bodes trouble for Sunnydale. Now Angel is a dark, evil vampire, far more dangerous even than Drusilla or Spike. Soon, Buffy realizes she will have to contemplate the impossible: killing the only man she has ever loved. When Angel teams with Spike

and Dru, Buffy must bring out the big guns to stop the killer trio.

**27. “Phases”** Written by Rob Des Hotel and Dean Batali; Directed by Bruce Seth Green; airdate: January 27, 1998; *Guest Cast:* Jack Conley (Cain); Camilla Griggs (Gym Teacher); Larry Baby (III); Meghan Perry (Theresa Klusmeyer); Keith Campbell (Werewolf).

A werewolf is on the loose in Sunnydale, and it is up to Buffy and her friends to discover the identity of the offending monster. Xander thinks he knows the answer, but instead “outs” a gay classmate. The werewolf in questions turns out to be none other than Oz, Willow’s boyfriend and a cool band member.

**28. “Bewitched, Bothered and Bewildered”** Written by Marti Noxon; Directed by James A. Contner; airdate: February 10, 1998; *Guest Cast:* Kristine Sutherland (Joyce Summers); Robia La Morte (Jenny Calendar); Elizabeth Anne Allen (Amy); Mercedes McNab (Harmony); Jason Hall (Devon); Jennie Chester (Kate); Kristen Winnicki (Cordette); Scott Hamm (Jock); Tamara Braun (Frenzied Girl); James Marsters (Spike); Juliet Landau (Drusilla); Lorna Scott (Miss Beakman).

Xander is dumped at the Valentine’s Day dance by the fickle Cordelia, leaving him fuming with anger. Xander asks the local witch, Amy, for a potion which will make him irresistible to Cordelia. The spell goes wrong badly, leaving Cordelia still feeling indifferent over him. On the other hand, every other woman in Sunnydale, from Mrs. Summers to a bevy of vampires, find Xander absolutely irresistible.

**29. “Passion”** Written by Ty King; Directed by Michael E. Gershman; airdate: February 24, 1998; *Guest Cast:* Kristine Sutherland (Joyce Summers); Robia La Morte (Jenny Calendar); James Marsters (Spike); Juliet Landau (Drusilla).

The evil Angel is bound and determined to kill Buffy, the woman he once loved. As Angel’s torments become increasingly dangerous, threatening Buffy’s friends and even her Mother, Mrs. Calendar, a gypsy herself, works desperately to undo the curse that has robbed Angel of his soul. In response to this act of kindness, Angel kills the beloved teacher, sending poor Giles into mourning.

**30. “Killed by Death”** Written by Rob Des Hotel and Dean Batali; Directed by Deran Sarafian; airdate March 3, 1998; *Guest Cast:* Kristine Sutherland (Joyce Summers); Richard Herd (Dr. Stanley Backer); Willie Garson (Security Guard); Andrew Ducote (Ryan); Juanita Jennings (Dr. Wilkes); Robert Munic (Intern); Mimi Paley (Little Buffy); Denise Johnson (Celia); James Jude (Courtney).

Buffy is sick with the flu, but she insists on challenging the demonic Angel anyway. After Xander, Willow, and Cordy save her life in battle, Buffy is sent to a hospital to recuperate. Buffy has always had a deep-seated fear of hospitals, ever since her cousin Celia died in one, and now Buffy learns why: sick children are being terrorized and murdered by an invisible personification of death that only the young can see. When a doctor attempting to save the children is slashed, killed, and dragged away by death, Buffy decides to remain in the hospital to protect the children and fight the demon.

**31. “I Only Have Eyes for You”** Written by Marti Noxon; Directed by James Whitmore Jr.; airdate: April 28, 1998; *Guest Cast:* James Marsters (Spike); Juliet Landau (Drusilla); Armin Shimerman (Principal Snyder); Christopher Gorham (James Stanley); Meredith Salinger (Grace Newman); Miriam Flynn (Ms. Frank); John Hawkes (George); Sarah Bib, Brian Poth (Fighters); Anna Coman-Hidy and Vanessa Bodnar (50s Girls); Brian Reddy (Policeman); James Lurie (Mr. Miller); Ryan

Taszreak (Ben).

Sunnydale High is haunted on the eve of the Sadie Hawkins' dance by one, perhaps two, restless spirits. A dejected Giles suspects that Mrs. Calendar is haunting the school, but the facts of the case bear out a different conclusion. In the mid-1950s a teacher and her student lover both died violently after a torrid love affair. Now, Buffy and Angel are possessed by these spirits and find themselves acting out the moments leading up to the tragic deaths.

**32. "Go Fish"** Written by David Fury and Elin Hampton; Directed by David Semel airdate: May 5, 1998; *Guest Cast:* Armin Shimerman (Principal Snyder); Charles Cyphers (Coach Marin); Conchata Ferrell (Nurse Greenleigh); Jeremy Garrett (Cameron Walker); Wentworth Miller (Gage Petronzi); Jake Patellis (Dodd McAlvy); Shane West (Sean); Danny Strong (Jonathan).

Sunnydale's winning swimming team faces a new challenge when members of its team start to die, seemingly devoured by green-scaled monster-humanoids from the sea. Buffy and friends look into the killings, and Xander goes undercover by joining the swim team. Buffy soon learns that the sea monsters are not devouring team members ... they *are* the team-members, transformed into beasts! The catalyst for this nefarious change is a Russian experimental steroid being administered by the team coach in the steam of the team's daily sauna.

**33. "Becoming" (Part I)** Written and directed by Joss Whedon; airdate: May 12, 1998; *Guest Cast:* Kristine Sutherland (Joyce Summers); James Marsters (Spike); Juliet Landau (Drusilla); Armin Shimerman (Principal Snyder); Bianca Lawson (Kendra); Julie Benz (Darla); Jack McGee (Curator); Richard Riehle (Assistant); Shannon Wellese (Gypsy Woman); Zitto Kazaan (Gypsy Man); Ginger Williams (Girl); Nina Gervitz (Teacher).

Even as final exams loom close, Buffy is worried about how and when to finish things with the murderous Angel once and for all. Meanwhile, Giles examines an ancient artifact recently unearthed near the Hellmouth, a statue which when activated properly via occult methods can open the doorway to hell and suck all life on planet Earth into that nether region. While studying chemistry, Willow and Buffy find a spell belonging to the late Ms. Calendar which can restore Angel's lost soul. Kendra is killed in action while Willow tries to use the spell; the library is attacked by Drusilla, and Giles is kidnapped.

**34. "Becoming" (Part II)** Written and directed by Joss Whedon; airdate: May 19, 1998; *Guest Cast:* Kristine Sutherland (Joyce Summers); Robia La Morte (Jenny Calendar); James Marsters (Spike); Juliet Landau (Drusilla); Armin Shimerman (Principal Snyder); James G. MacDonald; Susan Leslie and Thomas G. Waites (Cops).

Giles has been kidnapped, Kendra is dead, and Buffy is now a fugitive from the law. When the Slayer learns that Willow is in the hospital in a coma, she realizes it is finally time to end things with the soulless Angel. Buffy finds an unexpected ally in Spike, who is desperate to win Drusilla back from Angel. In a final gambit to rescue Giles and save the world, Buffy locks horns and swords with Angel, only to be faced with the most difficult and heart-wrenching task in her life.

• *Third Season (1998–1999)*

**35. "Anne"** Written and directed by Joss Whedon; airdate: September 29, 1998; *Guest Cast:* Kristine

Sutherland (Joyce Summers); Julia Lee (Lilly); Carlos Jacott, Mary-Pat Green, Chad Todhunter, Larry Bagby III (Larry); Michael Leopard (Roughneck); Harley Zumbum (Demon Guard); Barbara Pilavin (Old Woman); Harrison Young (Old Man); Alex Toma (Aaron); Dell Yount (Truck Guy).

With Buffy out of town, despondent over her choice to send Angel to hell, Xander, Willow, and Oz try to fill her shoes in Sunnydale as slayers. Meanwhile, Buffy is in Los Angeles working at a greasy spoon under the name "Anne." She discovers there that teenage runaways are disappearing to a hellish underground where evil demons are using the humans as slave labor. Buffy descends to the underworld to save the captured teenagers, but she must act fast, lest she be prematurely aged in the bubble of "quick" time below the surface.

**36. "Dead Man's Party"** Written by Marti Noxon; Directed by James Whitmore Jr.; airdate: October 6, 1998; *Guest Cast:* Kristine Sutherland (Joyce Summers); Nancy Lenehan (Pat); Armin Shimerman (Principal Snyder); Danny Strong (Jonathan); Jason Hall (Devon); Paul Morgan Stetler (Young Doctor); Chris Garnant (Stoner #1).

Buffy returns home to Sunnydale to find that her friends have taken up slaying, and that her Mom has added an unusual decoration to the house: a strange Nigerian mask. When Buffy has a difficult time rebonding with her alienated friends and schoolmates, Buffy's Mom invites her friends over for a party. Willow and Xander's feelings of abandonment (by Buffy) come to the fore of the party, but soon Buffy must contend with the Nigerian mask, an evil artifact which is capable of reanimating the dead.

**37. "Faith, Hope and Trick"** Written by David Greenwalt; Directed by James A. Contner; airdate: October 13, 1998; *Guest Cast:* Kristine Sutherland (Mrs. Summers); K. Todd Freeman (Mr. Trick); Fab Filippo (Scott); Jeremy Roberts (Coquistos); Eliza Dushku (Faith); Armin Shimerman (Principal Snyder); John Ennis (Manager).

While Buffy has recurring nightmares about Angel's death, a new vampire named Mr. Trick comes to town in the service of a vampire master called Coquistos, a beast so old his feet and hands are cloven. Another new arrival in town is the beautiful Faith, a second and highly unorthodox slayer. Mr. Trick and his Master are out to kill Faith in revenge for a scar she branded Coquistos with, and now Buffy gets dragged into the conflict.

**38. "Beauty and the Beasts"** Written by Marti Noxon; Directed by James Whitmore Jr.; airdate: October 20, 1998; *Guest Cast:* Fab Filippo (Mr. Platt); John Patrick White (Scott); Danielle Weeks (Debbie); Phil Lewis (Pete); Eliza Dushku (Faith).

Someone or something is killing people by night in Sunnydale, and Buffy fears it is Angel (returned from hell), and Willow fears the culprit is Oz (a werewolf because of the full moon). While the girls worry about their respective men, the real answer lays with an experiment gone wrong. A high school kid named Pete is so insecure about his manhood that he has created a special formula to make him more macho ... a formula which has also turned him into a monster and an abusive boyfriend.

**39. "Homecoming"** Written and directed by David Greenwalt; airdate: November 3, 1998; *Guest Cast:* K. Todd Freeman (Mr. Trick); Fab Filippo (Scott); Ian Abercrombie (German); Harry Groener (Mayor Wilkins); Eliza Dushku (Faith); Jeremy Ratchford (Gorch); Jennifer Hetrick (Teacher); Danny Strong (Jonathan); Robert Treveiler (Gary); J.C. Quinn (Lone Customer).



Boyfriend Scott dumps Buffy on the eve of the Homecoming Dance and out of despair she decides to run for Homecoming Queen against Cordelia. At the same time, a slew of assassins arrive in town to off Buffy in what Mr. Trick calls "Slayerfest '98." On the way to the dance, Buffy and Cordelia are hijacked in their limo by the assassins, and the girls must stay alive while simultaneously settling their differences.

**40. "Band Candy"** Written by Jane Espenson; Directed by Michael Lange; airdate: November 10, 1998; *Guest Cast:* K. Todd Freeman (Mr. Trick); Kristine Sutherland (Joyce Summers); Robin Sachs (Ethan); Harry Groener (Mayor Wilkins); Armin Shimerman (Principal Snyder); Jason Hall (Devon); Peg Stewart (Mrs. Barton).

Principal Snyder orders Buffy and friends to sell candy to raise money for the Sunnydale High marching band. Unfortunately, the band candy has the unusual side effect of turning all of the adults in town, including Giles, Mrs. Summers, and Snyder, into rampaging, rebellion-crazed adolescents. The contaminated candy is the latest evil plan sponsored by Mayor Wilkins and his new majordomo, Mr. Trick. A teenage-acting Giles realizes his cultist former friend Ethan is also working on the contaminated candy.

**41. "Revelations"** Written by Douglas Petrie; Directed by James A. Contner; airdate: November 17, 1998; *Guest Cast:* Serena Scott Thomas (Gwendolyn Post); Eliza Dushku (Faith).

While Buffy continues to keep Angel's return to Sunnydale a secret, Faith's new watcher, Mrs. Gwendolyn Post, arrives in town. Post warns that a demon called Logos is seeking the all-powerful glove of Miligon, an occult object. Now Buffy and Faith must keep the artifact from falling into the wrong hands, but all is not as it seems on this particular hunt. Worse, Xander discovers that Angel is back in town, and with the help of Willow, Oz, Giles, and Cordelia, he stages an intervention for Buffy.

**42. "Lovers Walk"** Written by Dan Vebber; Directed by David Semel; airdate: November 24, 1998; *Guest Cast:* Kristine Sutherland (Joyce Summers); Harry Groener (Mayor Wilkins); James Marsters (Spike); Jack Plotnick (Deputy Mayor); Marc Burnham (Lenny); Suzanne Krull (Clerk).

Buffy and the crew get their SAT score results, and Spike returns to Sunnydale, lovelorn and despairing for Drusilla. While Giles is away at a Druidic camp getaway, Buffy weighs her options for the future and wonders if she should leave town to go to college. Spike abducts Willow and forces her to conjure a love spell that he can use on Drusilla, who jilted him for a chaos demon. In rescuing Willow, Cordelia and Oz discover that Willow and Xander have become romantically entangled behind their backs.

**43. "The Wish"** Written by Marti Noxon; Directed by David Greenwalt; airdate: December 8, 1998; *Guest Cast:* Mark Metcalf (The Master); Mercedes McNab (Harmony); Nicole Bilderback (Cordette #1); Nathan Anderson (John Lee); Mariah O'Brien (Nancy); Gary Imhoff (Teacher); Robert Covarrubias (Caretaker).

An angry Cordelia, still smarting over Xander's infidelity with Willow, uses the powers of a magical "wish" necklace belonging to a student named Anya. Cordelia wishes that Buffy Summers had never come to Sunnydale, and reality suddenly alters drastically. Cordelia finds herself in a town overrun with vampires (including an undead Xander and Willow, and an "ascended" Master). Attacked by

Xander, an injured Cordelia finds herself in the care of Giles, who is fighting vampires even in this dimension, and she warns him that this is not the way things are supposed to be.

**44. “Amends”** Written and directed by Joss Whedon; airdate: December 17, 1998; *Guest Cast:* Kristine Sutherland (Mrs. Summers); Eliza Dushku (Faith); Robia La Morte (Jenny Calendar); Shane Barach (Daniel); Saverio Guerra, Edward Edwards, Cornelia Hayes O’Herlihy, Mark Kriski (Weatherman); Tom Michael Bailey (Tree Seller Guy).

As Christmas approaches, Angel is tortured by memories of victims he has taken throughout his long life, including his friends in 1838 Dublin. Meanwhile, Oz and Willow reconcile, and Buffy invites Faith to spend Christmas at her house. Angel seeks help with his plight from Giles, who simply cannot forgive Angel for the death of his true love, Jenny Calendar. As Angel’s behavior grows more erratic, Buffy realizes that in order to save the angst-ridden vampire she will have to face down a monster beyond sin, beyond damnation: a creature of the darkness called “The First Evil.”

**45. “Gingerbread”** Written by Jane Espenson; Story by Thania St. John and Jane Espenson; Directed by James Whitmore Jr.; airdate: January 12, 1999; *Guest Cast:* Kristine Sutherland (Joyce Summers); Elizabeth Ann Allen (Amy); Harry Groener (Mayor Wilkins); Jordan Baker (Sheila Rosenberg); Armin Shimerman (Principal Snyder); Lindsay Taylor (Little Girl/Gretel); Shawn Pyfrom (Little Boy/Hansel); Blake Swendson (Michael); Grant Garrison (Roy); Roger Morrissey (Demon); Daniel Tanim (Mooster).

Buffy’s mom joins Buffy for a night of slaying and is horrified by the brutal deaths of two young children in a playground. In response to this tragedy, Joyce organizes a group railing against occult-oriented violence, known as M.O.O. (Mothers Opposed to the Occult). This organization promptly confiscates inappropriate books from Giles’ library and conducts searches of student lockers. Soon, witches in town (including Willow) are being scapegoated and bullied, and Buffy must face down her mom before Sunnydale becomes a fascist state bent on destroying all freedom and liberty.

**46. “Helpless”** Written by David Fury; Directed by James A. Contner; airdate: January 19, 1999; *Guest Cast:* Kristine Sutherland (Joyce Summers); Jeff Kober (Zachary Craylag); Harris Yulin (Quentin Travers); Dominic Keating (Blair); David Haydn-Jones (Hobson); Nick Cornish (Guy); Don Dowe (Construction Worker).

As Buffy turns 18, she faces two disappointments: her father cancels his visit to town, and she loses all of her slaying abilities. Giles proves unhelpful in solving the latter problem and is, in fact, behind the vanishing powers. At the behest of the Council of Watchers, Buffy is to be part of a slayer “rite of passage” in which she must kill a vampire while virtually defenseless and powerless. Locked in a tomb with a vicious vampire, Buffy must prove herself or die.

**47. “The Zeppo”** Written by Dan Vebber; Directed by James Whitmore Jr.; airdate: January 26, 1999; *Guest Cast:* Saverio Guerra, Channon Roe (Jack O’Toole); Michael Cudlitz (“Big” Bob); Eliza Dushku (Faith); Darin Heames (Parker); Scott Torrence (Dickie); Whitney Dylan (Lysette); Vaughn Armstrong (Cop).

Xander is tired of being the “zeppo,” the useless part of the slaying group, and he buys a car to help distinguish himself. Unfortunately, notoriety is the last thing Xander needs when he hooks up with three undead gang boys who plot to detonate an explosive in the high school boiler room! While

Xander contends with his problem, an apocalypse cult attempts to open the Hellmouth. Xander unexpectedly hooks up with the tempestuous Faith and proves his worth in more ways than one.

**48. “Bad Girls”** Written by Douglas Petrie; Directed by Michael Lange; airdate: February 9, 1999; *Guest Cast:* Kristine Sutherland (Joyce Summers); Harry Groener (Mayor Wilkins); K. Todd Freeman (Mr. Trick); Jack Plotnick (Deputy Mayor); Alexis Denisof (Wesley Windom Price); Christian Chlemenson; Eliza Dushku (Faith); Alex Skuby (Vincent); Wendy Clifford (Mrs. Taggart); Ron Rogge (Cop).

A new watcher is in town to take over for Giles, but nobody likes the prissy, arrogant young Brit. At the same time, a 15th-century vampire cult serving an obese, fleshy demon called Balthazar also arrives in town to reclaim a powerful, magical amulet. While Faith and Buffy go in search of the ancient vampire cult, Faith encourages a more loose, rebellious attitude in Buffy. This new tenor has deadly consequences for the Sunnydale Slayers when one of them accidentally kills a mortal with a stake through the heart.

**49. “Consequences”** Written by Marti Noxon; Directed by Michael Gershman; airdate: February 16, 1999; *Guest Cast:* Kristine Sutherland (Joyce Summers); Harry Groener (Mayor Wilkins); K. Todd Freeman (Trick); Alexis Denisof (Wesley Windom Price); Eliza Dushku (Faith); Jack Plotnick (Deputy Mayor); James G. MacDonald, Amy Powell (TV News Reporter); Patricia Place (Woman).

Faith lies and tells Giles that Buffy murdered an innocent human while out slaying. This complicates things for Buffy, who has been assigned by Wesley to investigate the dead man’s—the deputy mayor’s—death. Soon, the police are involved and questioning Faith and Buffy about the unsolved murder. Matters go from bad to worse when Wesley kidnaps Faith from Angel’s care and threatens to take her back to England to stand trial before the Watcher’s council.

**50. “Doppelgangland”** Written and Directed by Joss Whedon; airdate: February 23, 1999; *Guest Cast:* Harry Groener (Mayor Wilkins); Alexis Denisof (Wesley Windom Price); Emma Caulfield (Ananka/Anya); Ethan Erickson (Percy); Eliza Dushku (Faith); Armin Shimerman (Principal Snyder); Jason Hall (Devon); Michael Hagy (Alfonse); Andy Umberger (O’Hoffryn); Megan Gray (Sandy); Norma Michaels (Older Woman); Corey Michael Blake (Waiter); Jennifer Nicole (Body Double Willow).

Ananka, the wish demon who once granted Cordelia a devastating wish to change the fabric of creation, seeks to regain her power base. Meanwhile, Buffy and Faith go through a rigorous physical and mental evaluation at the hands of the new watcher, and Willow is “asked” by Principal Snyder to tutor a flunking athlete. Ananka masquerades as a normal high school student and enlists Willow’s assistance in casting a spell which will bring the wish necklace back in her grasp. In the act, the alternate Willow, a vampire from the other dimension, appears to confront the real Willow in this dimension.

**51. “Enemies”** Written by Douglas Petrie; Directed by David Grossman; airdate: March 16, 1999; *Guest Cast:* Kristine Sutherland (Joyce Summers); Harry Groener (Mayor Richard Wilkins III); Alexis Denisof (Wesley Windom Price); Eliza Dushku (Faith); Michael Mannasser, Gary Bullock.

After Buffy and Angel see a movie together and confront the fact that they can never be together sexually without compromising Angel’s immortal soul, Buffy and Faith meet with a demon who

offers to sell them the “Books of Ascension,” before Mayor Wilkins himself “ascends” on “Graduation Day.” Worried, the mayor orders the double-agent Faith to kill the demon before Buffy can get the books, and then Faith seeks solace from Angel for her wayward behavior. Buffy witnesses Faith and Angel in an embrace and mistakes his attentions, even as the mayor determines it is time to rid Angel of his soul once more. Faith and a converted, evil, Angel kidnap Buffy and plot to torture her as the mayor’s big day approaches.

**52. “Earshot”** Written by Jane Espenson; Directed by Regis Kimble; airdate: September 21, 1999; *Guest Cast:* Kristine Sutherland (Joyce Summers); Alexis Denisof (Wesley Windom Price); Ethan Erickson, Danny Strong, Larry Bagby III (Larry); Keram Malicki-Sanchez (Freddy Iverson); Justin Doran (Hogan); Lauren Roman (Nancy); Wendy Worthington (Lunch Lady); Robert Arce (Mr. Beach); Molly Bryant (Ms. Murray); Rich Muller (Student); Jay Michael Ferguson (Another Student).

Buffy vanquishes one of two new (mouthless) demons in town and then inherits one of the dead demon’s “aspects,” specifically, his ability to read minds. Soon, Buffy is hearing the thoughts of all her friends (excluding Angel, who is immune because he is a vampire) and starting to go crazy from the din. Then, in the cafeteria, Buffy hears the thoughts of a disaffected person who is planning to kill everybody in school the next day. The trail to the killer takes Buffy to the school newspaper editor, sad little Jonathan, and finally, to a hulking cafeteria worker.

*Note:* “Earshot” was scheduled to be aired on April 27, 1999, but it was shelved before airtime because of the tragic shootings at Columbine High School in Littleton, Colorado. The show was rescheduled for airing, some five months later! Strangely, “Earshot,” filmed before Littleton, makes reference to Littleton-style events with sensitivity and wit. Because the episode really never shows a student gunning down classmates, it is hard to understand why this particular episode was targeted and then banned for so long.

**53. “Choices”** Written by David Fury; Directed by James A. Contner; airdate: May 4, 1999; *Guest Cast:* Kristine Sutherland (Joyce Summers); Harry Groener (Mayor Wilkins); Alexis Denisof (Wes); Eliza Dushku (Faith); Armin Shimerman (Principal Snyder).

The mayor sends Faith to the airport to retrieve a trunk from a Central American flight which he says is crucial to his ascension. Meanwhile, Buffy’s mother wants her to go away to college at Northwestern, and Buffy realizes she wants to go too ... which means stopping the mayor’s ascension before graduation. Buffy learns that the important crate is the Box of Gavrok, a container of more than fifty billion carnivorous hell spiders. Buffy and friends stage a daring *Mission: Impossible*-style operation to steal the Box of Gavrok, but things go wrong when Faith captures Willow.

**54. “The Prom”** Written by Marti Noxon; Directed by David Solomon; airdate: May 11, 1999; *Guest Cast:* Kristine Sutherland (Joyce Summers); Alexis Denisof (Wes); Emma Caulfield (Anya); Brad Kane, Danny Strong (Jonathan); Bonita Friedericy (Mrs. Finkle); Andrea E. Taylor (Sales Girl); Mike Kimmel (Harry); Tove Kingsbury (The Boy); Michael Zlabinger (Student at Mic); Monica Serene Garnich (Pretty Girl); Joe Howard (Priest); Damien Eckhardt (Jack Mayhew); Stephanie Denise (Tux Girl).

Anya, the wish demon trapped in teenage human form, asks Xander to the senior prom, and he accepts. Buffy’s Mom goes to visit Angel because she is concerned that Buffy and Angel are from very different worlds. With the prom looming, Angel worries that he and Buffy cannot possibly share a

future together, and he decides to leave Sunnydale for good. Meanwhile, three vicious hell beasts try to crash the prom.

**55. “Graduation Day” (Part I);** Written and directed by Joss Whedon; airdate: May 18, 1999; *Guest Cast:* Kristine Sutherland (Joyce Summers); Harry Groener (Mayor Wilkins); Alexis Denisof (Wesley Windom Price); Mercedes McNab (Harmony); Ethan Erickson (Percy); Emma Caulfield (Anya); Eliza Dushku (Faith); Armin Shimerman (Principal Snyder); James Lurie (Mr. Miller); Hal Robinson (Lester); Adrian Neil (Vampire Lackey #1); John Rosenfield (Vampire Lackey #2).

Graduation day and the mayor’s ascension of evil approach rapidly and Xander fears his number is finally up. Meanwhile, Faith murders a professor for the mayor who may have the knowledge how to stop the ascension. Anya, the only Sunnydale resident, human or otherwise, to ever witness an ascension, provides some pertinent information on the subject even as the mayor prepares for his hellish commencement. Meanwhile, Faith shoots Angel with a poison arrow and the only cure is the blood of a slayer.

**56. “Graduation Day” (Part II)** Written and directed by Joss Whedon; original airdate (delayed): May 25, 1999; ultimate airdate: July 13, 1999; *Guest Cast:* Harry Groener (Mayor Wilkins); Alexis Denisof (Wesley); Danny Strong (Jonathan); Larry Bagby, III (Percy); Mercedes McNab (Harmony); Ethan Erickson, Eliza Dushku (Faith); Armin Shimerman (Snyder); Paulo Andres (Dr. Powell); Susan Chuang (Nurse); Tom Bellin (Dr. Gold); Samuel Bliss Cooper (Vamp Lackey).

Buffy fails to bring Faith home to Angel, who requires her blood, the blood of a slayer, to survive the poison. Buffy offers herself to Angel and, desperate, he accepts. Buffy ends up in the hospital just down the corridor from Faith and has a strange encounter with her on the dream plane. Soon, both the mayor and Buffy are formulating strategies for their mutual commencements, ascension, and graduation, the day when good and evil in Sunnydale will clash once and for all.

## *Sleepwalkers* (1997)

### CRITICAL RECEPTION

“despite its B-movie feel, *Sleepwalkers* is surprisingly smart in its technogimmickry and its talk about the mythology of the subconscious ... If the show toned down its lurid element, it would deserve a chance to dream on.”—Will Joyner, *The New York Times*: “For Harrowing Horror Tales, Dreams Are a Fertile Field,” November 1, 1997.

“these pj warriors are nothing if not deadly serious, although apparently it hasn’t occurred to any of them that the inability to distinguish between dreams and reality is, in fact, psychotic ... Freud as an action adventure series.”—Stacey D’Erasmus, *US*: “Hot TV,” October 1997, page 82.

“Fanciful, played with a straight-face and directed by David Nutter with an impressive eye to detail and effects ... at least imagination’s at work, and that’s entertaining.”—Tony Scott, *Variety*, October 27, 1997, page 32.

### FORMAT

Neurophysiologist Nathan Bradford (Bruce Greenwood), together with his elite staff, including Vincent (Abraham Benrubi), a polysomnographic technician, and Dr. Kate Russell (Naomi Watts), a dream interpreter and clinical psychologist, works at the Morpheus Institute, a government installation dedicated to deciphering the dream plane. Bradford and his co-workers have mastered a scientific technique by which they can enter the “nocturnal world” of their troubled patients, and administer therapy right there, as well as diagnose psychological impairments.

In each adventure of this briefly-aired NBC network drama, Bradford and his staff journey into the dreams of their patients, and face a world which melds fantasy, reality, and, of course, nightmares. This is a dangerous “mission” for Bradford and company because, as all fans of *A Nightmare on Elm Street* will recall, if you die or are hurt in your dreams, you will awake facing the same injury in your waking existence. The human connection in *Sleepwalkers* came from Dr. Bradford’s personal and tragic relationship to his work. In one of his “sleep cradles” lies his wife Gail, trapped perpetually in a coma. His only way to reach his true love is through the hyper-REM process which allows him to walk in the slumber of others.

### HISTORY

Billed by NBC as part of its “thrillology,” the short-lived *Sleepwalkers* very briefly inherited the Saturday night time slot vacated when *Dark Skies* was canceled, and the schedule reshuffled. It aired between *Pretender* and *Profiler*, two borderline genre series, and starred Bruce Greenwood, the charismatic hero of *Nowhere Man* and star of such films as Atom Egoyan’s *The Sweet Hereafter* (1997). Although the mold of *Sleepwalkers* was clearly patterned after *The X-Files* mix of science and frightening “extreme possibilities,” the focus of *Sleepwalkers* was “dreams,” which made the series quite different from competition such as *Millennium* and *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*. Although dreams (usually premonitory) had been an element of shows such as *One Step Beyond*, *The Next Step Beyond*,

*Freddy's Nightmares*, *Beyond Reality*, and films like *Dreamscape* (1985), and Wes Craven's *A Nightmare on Elm Street* (1984), *Sleepwalkers* represented the first time that the landscape of our slumber would be the fodder for weekly horror contemplations.

Prominent guest stars on *Sleepwalkers* included Harry Groener, the evil mayor of Sunnydale on *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, as the equally evil "Smiling Man," and Ray Wise, who was Leland Palmer and the host to "Killer Bob" in *Twin Peaks*.

*Sleepwalkers* became notorious as one of the most expensive and short-lived series of the 1997 season. NBC canceled the series after only two prime airings. For at least a year, this was a record, until UPN trashed *Mercy Point* after two shows and ABC dropped *Strange World* with equal speed (just three airings). *Sleepwalkers* has been aired in its entirety overseas, but not yet in the United States. Because of its brief life and relative obscurity, episodes are not currently available for this author to review.

### CAST AND CREDITS:

*Cast:* Bruce Greenwood (Dr. Nathan Bradford); Kathrin Nicholson (Gail Bradford); Jeffrey D. Sams (Ben Costigan); Naomi Watts (Kate Russell); Abraham Benrubi (Vincent).

*Credits:* *Executive Producers:* Stephen Kronish, David S. Goyer. *Created by:* Stephen Kronish, David S. Goyer. *Co-Executive Producer:* David Nutter. *Co-Producers:* Sara Charno, Stephen Gaghan, Harker Wade, Robert Parigi. *Supervising Producer:* Steve Beers. *CASTING:* Susan Booker. *Music:* Jeff Rona. *Editor:* Randy Jori Morgan; *Art Director:* Alex Hajdu. *Sound:* Tom Allen. From NBC Studios in association with Columbia TriStar Television.

### EPISODE GUIDE (1997)

**1. "Pilot"** Written by David S. Goyer and Stephen Kronish; Directed by David Nutter; airdate: November 1, 1997; *Guest Cast:* Lewis Arquette, Michael Watson (Steve); Bobbi Sanders (Jill); David Kirkwood, Christian Copelin, Jeffrey Noah, Carla Capps.

At the Morpheus Institute, a team of scientists investigating the "dream world" put their technology to use to help an ex-air force pilot cope with his nightmares.

**2. "Night Terrors"** Written by Stephen Gaghan; Directed by Kristoffer Tabori; airdate: November 8, 1997; *Guest Cast:* Michael Watson (Steve); Ray Wise, Harry Groener (The Smiling Man); Anna Gunn (Angie); Pepper Sweeney (Deacon).

A boy's sudden change in demeanor signals to his parents the fact that something is terribly wrong with him on a subconscious level. Dr. Bradford soon finds an evil character influencing the boy's dreams.

### UNAIRED EPISODES

**3. "Forlorn"** Written by Todd Ellis Kessler; Directed by Jeffrey W. Woolnaugh; unaired; *Guest Cast:* Michael Watson (Steve); Timothy Webber, Brooks Almy, Devon Odessa, Matthew Walker.

An erotic dream with disturbing overtones captivates the inhabitants of a typical American town.

**4. “Eye of the Beholder”** Written by Sara B. Charno; Directed by James Whitmore Jr.; unaired; *Guest Cast*: Michael Watson (Steve); Daphne Ashbrook, Robert Wisden, Lorena Gale.

A woman who has recently had an organ transplant begins to experience strange dreams which she fears may belong to the organ’s original owner.

**5. “Counting Sheep”** Written by David S. Goyer; Directed by William Malone; unaired; *Guest Cast*: Michael Watson (Steve); Romy Rosemont, Jeff Doucette, Patrick Kilpatrick.

Further information unavailable.

**6. “Passed Imperfect”** Written by Jonathan Robert Kaplan; Directed by Lee Bonner; unaired; *Guest Cast*: Harry Groener (The Smiling Man); Paul Dooley, Gillian Barber.

Dr. Bradford’s dream nemesis, the villainous “Smiling Man,” returns.

**7. “A Matter of Fax”** Written by Stephen Kronish; Directed by James Whitmore, Jr.; unaired; *Guest Cast*: Michael Watson (Steve); Ray Wise.

Further information unavailable.



*Prey (1998)***CRITICAL RECEPTION**

“While the show boasts both an intriguing premise and a comely lead in Debra Messing ... [it] doesn’t quite draw you in ... A peek at future segment indicates the lameness quotient stands to rise considerably ... What tends to boost *Prey* is the unsettling sense that practically anyone on-screen might be one of the DNA blessed since they essentially look normal ... the elimination of the monster angle feels like an original approach.”—Ray Richmond, *Variety*, January 12–18, 1998, page 100.

“surprisingly lively ... Silly at its core and straight-faced in its delivery, *Prey* is also effective as a thriller and a sly science fiction story ... the show’s real strength is its creepy *X-Files* paranoia.”—Caryn James, *The New York Times*: “Humanoids Make Scientists Paranoids,” January 15, 1998, page E5.

“First, nobody knows the other race exists, until Parker discovers them through blood testing. Yet the new species seems to be organized enough to have developed a cohesive philosophy ... The entire notion, I’m afraid, of a new species springing into place, achieving adulthood, and developing a group identity overnight without being noticed, even in Southern California, is very illogical ... There’s as much chance of this show surviving as my ever seeing a return of *Ned and Stacey* to prime-time TV.”—Peter Huston, *Skeptical Inquirer*: “ABC’s *Prey*—Not Exactly the Science Adventure Promised,” May-June 1998, page 9.

**FORMAT**

Hoping to prove that the brutal murder of her superior and mentor Anne Coulter is related to the killing spree of the unrepentant, incarcerated serial killer, Randall Lynch, beautiful geneticist Dr. Sloan Parker (Debra Messing) uncovers a startling and quite unexpected fact. Randall Lynch is not human. He is 1.6 percent different from the rest of us, more different, in fact, than human beings are from chimpanzees. Sloan’s discovery of this new species is amazing and frightening, and Sloan shares the news not only with police detective Ray Peterson (Frankie Faison), but with fellow geneticist Ed Tate (Vincent Ventresca). Sloan is then approached by the F.B.I. regarding the newly discovered species, but her contact, agent Tom Daniels (Adam Storke), has a secret of his own. He is not human: he is one of the new species as well, though he is not hostile to human beings and is even beginning to experience emotions (a facet of humanity his cohorts lack).

As the series continues, Sloan makes further discoveries about the new and hostile race sharing our planet. The *Homo dominants* (as they are later named) sleep on strange, black monolith-like beds, they may be telepathic, they have an incredibly hyperactive metabolism, they are super strong and super intelligent. Although Sloan shares all this data with her new lab administrator, Dr. Attwood (Larry Drake), he may not be a friend at all. In fact, he seems to be in cahoots with an “Attractive Woman” (Alexandra Hedison), whose motives and agenda remain unclear.

As *Prey* progresses, Sloan works with Tom to learn more about his secretive species, but there is danger around every corner. Part of this danger stems from the fact that Tom and his brethren appear

human, and are difficult to detect. This fact makes establishing trust difficult for Sloan. Still, she begins to develop strong romantic feelings for Tom.

Fast paced, this short-run ABC series unfolds rapidly and ends with an (as yet) unresolved cliffhanger.

## HISTORY

A surprisingly inventive series, *Prey* landed on our TV sets in 1998 and scared the heck out of viewers who took the time to stick with it. Its premise, that a more advanced but lookalike species is existing in man's world undetected, was daring and different enough for the series to avoid the dreaded *X-Files* "rip-off" label which had sunk *Dark Skies*, *Strange Luck*, *The Burning Zone*, and would later plague the interesting *Strange World*. Lending dynamic support to the series was lead actress Debra Messing, later a superstar courtesy of her role on the breakthrough sitcom *Will & Grace*, who created a memorable female character and fierce fighter in Dr. Sloan Parker. Together with an enigmatic Larry Drake, *Dr. Giggles* (1992) himself, and a stoic Adam Storke as a human sympathizer among the new breed, Messing managed to explore in just thirteen episodes what became one of terror TV's best modern mysteries, and uncovered the identities and plans of this malevolent new species.

Directors on *Prey* included *Star Trek: The Next Generation* veteran Winrich Kolbe, and *X-Files* regulars Jim Charleston and Vern Gillum. Guest stars included Natalija Nogulich (*Dark Skies*: "Mercury Rising," *Star Trek: The Next Generation*: "Chain of Command"), Susanna Thompson (the Borg Queen of *Star Trek Voyager*: "Dark Frontier"), James Morrison (of *Space: Above and Beyond*) and Roger Howarth as the psychotic *homo dominant* terrorist named Randall Lynch.

Of all modern TV horrors, *Prey* was perhaps the one which felt most like a visual novel, as storyline ran directly into storyline and each succeeding chapter revealed a new element of the *Homo dominant* psychology, as well as plans to resist the subjugation of the human species. The series started off with a mystery ("Existence"), ballooned into the discovery of the new species ("Discovery"), went to the home land of the enemy ("Origins"), revealed the history of Tom the turncoat ("Veil), explored various plans to destroy humanity ("Collaboration," "Sleeper"), looked gravely to the future ("Progeny") and seemed to be building towards a dynamic conclusion in its season-ending (unresolved) cliffhanger ("Deliverance"). Cohesive, compelling, and complex, *Prey* represented terror TV at its best, a kind of quirky combination of *Invasion of the Body Snatchers* (no one knows who is human anymore), and *Star Trek* (with Tom as a stoic Spock-like hero attempting to experience human emotions), with some spicy romance between attractive leads thrown in for good measure.

Despite *Prey*'s promising qualities, not many people tuned into this neglected ABC hour, which premiered in mid-January of 1998, the so-called "second season" of the networks when new series not deemed strong enough for the fall are given a trial run. Although the "you've just been bumped down the food chain" ad line of *Prey* was heavily promoted, ABC did this William Schmidt-created series no favors by scheduling it at 8:00 P.M. on Thursday nights against the NBC sitcom powerhouse, *Friends*. Faced with such stiff competition, *Prey* was hunted to the brink of extinction, landing only 9 million or so viewers on a good night, and ranking no higher than 67th place in the Nielsen ratings.

Predictably, ABC responded to the low ratings by making *Prey* even harder to find. It was taken off the air completely for the months of April and May, and then ABC dumped the last five episodes during the dog days of summer (June and July) at an even worse time slot: Thursday nights at 9:00 P.M. This time around, *Prey* was pitted against the final season on *Seinfeld*, just about the only series

on TV *more* popular than *Friends*! Not surprisingly, *Prey* aired its final episode on July 9, 1998, and has not been heard from or much remembered since. ABC learned nothing from the debacle and treated its 1999 horror show *Strange World* in much the same haphazard fashion. At least in the case of *Prey* it was able to air all of its filmed episodes before being moth-balled.

### CRITICAL COMMENTARY

Similar to *Millennium* before it, *Prey* expertly trades on what could be the ultimate scare scenario: humankind's fall from grace. In this case, it is not the end of the world that sparks the terror however, but rather humankind's involuntary replacement at the hands of superior species, right here in our very own cities and neighborhoods. The thing that makes this series of recent vintage so compelling is that it is not aliens, monsters, or even conspiracies that must be defeated if the battle is to be won, but evolution, Mother Nature herself. Since Darwin and his theories are the playing ground of this series, much as Sigmund Freud was the incipient force behind *Sleepwalkers*, *Prey* raises many provocative questions about concepts such as "survival of the fittest," humankind's own prehistory (we supplanted the Neanderthals some 40,000 years ago, so why shouldn't another species do the same to us?), and of course, our assumed destiny as the dominant life form on the planet. Each episode of *Prey* obliquely handles these questions and others, making it a series which is obsessed, for one thing, with what it really means to be a human being. For instance, emotions do not exist in the *Homo dominants*. Does this fact reveal that emotions are destructive, an impediment to human survival, and therefore bred out of our successors? Or, does the lack of emotion in the new species signal the fact that *Homo dominants* represent only a blind alley, genetically speaking, a creature less perfect than the one who came before?

These ideas are played out on a stage filled with paranoia and dark conspiracies. The *Homo dominants* look just like humans, so they can infiltrate government agencies, hospitals, local bureaucracies, schools, even the highest levels of human society, and blend in totally unnoticed as they do grave damage to human institutions, history, and ideals. *Prey* remembers that the one essential fact of the human existence is that all persons, in the end, stand alone and separate in their own head. We do not know what other people are thinking because we are individual, lonely organisms who depend on clumsy tools like the written word, or vocal language, to convey ideas. *Prey* exploits this fact by putting its human heroes into situations where it is difficult, if not impossible, to guess who is the real enemy. It is a paranoia trip to be sure (the best since *Nowhere Man*), but it is worthy, and even optimistic too. This show argues persuasively that human emotions, relationships, and thus humanity itself, are all worthwhile. The character of Tom, the alien who sides with the humans, nicely establishes that humankind has pluses to go hand-in-hand with the obvious negatives.

None of this dialogue about the series is meant to suggest, however, that *Prey* is without flaws. For one thing, the scientists dramatized on this program are all incredibly good-looking and young (and very fit!) men and women, and they all seem to be fully versed in various schools of study which, in reality, would take several lifetimes to accumulate. Thus it is a bit difficult to accept that Ed Tate (the hunky blond surfer scientist) is equally comfortable with archaeology, laser machinery, and foreign languages as he is with genetic DNA examinations. And, for all of its own intelligence, *Prey* has the annoying habit of repeating for viewers the same clue again and again (sometimes in slow motion, sometimes in flashback, sometimes in black-and-white), just to make sure that we get "it." This was an element that slowed down *Poltergeist: The Legacy*, and it has a similar effect here. Horror shows would do well to remember that modern audiences are not stupid. They understand the plots and

details of these stories without being bludgeoned by “flashbacks.”

Believability is also a major problem at points because in the world of *Prey*, the media has “officially” announced to the United States population the existence of the nonhuman but human-looking predators, yet there is no public panic, no outcry, no critical shift in resources to combat this new enemy, nor even much worry. Were MSNBC or CNN to broadcast such an announcement in reality, the face of America would transform in seconds. We would become even more wary and suspicious of our neighbors, of those who seem different or hostile. *Prey* missed out on a good bet by failing to dramatize truthfully how our human world would respond to such important news, to such an immediate crisis. For example, what would the major religions, who all tend to believe that man is created in God’s image, think of news that a new master race walks God’s green earth? Would it be assumed that humankind has fallen from grace? Would the *Homo dominants* be worshipped as evidence of God’s hand and master plan, or feared as the work of Satan? These are just a few notions that could have been investigated had *Prey* thought to fully exploit its paranoid central concept.

There are situational gaffes too. Weird alien beds are encountered by Sloan as early as episode #2, “Discovery,” but she never asks Tom what specific physiological function these beds fulfill for the *Homo dominants*. It is a nice visual joke that these beds are designed to resemble the black monoliths of *2001: A Space Odyssey*, which also spurred evolutionary changes (and which also featured the word *Discovery* as the name of a spaceship), but it is illogical that the resourceful, curious Sloan would fail to follow up on what seems so important a piece of the new species’ puzzle. Again, as with the flashbacks, viewers are way ahead of the characters in the drama. Viewers screamed to know about those beds, but the “brilliant” Sloan did not think to bring them up!

Despite these flaws, *Prey* really worked well more often than not, even if its premise may have been scientifically preposterous. One of the most interesting episodes, “Progeny,” even featured some social commentary to go side-by-side with the terror. In this story, Sloan and Tom investigate the unexpected escalation of child violence in schools around the United States, and proceed to discover that the *Homo dominants* are fathering children with human mothers. As the story develops, one is reminded of Jonesboro or the more recent Littleton school disasters, and *Prey* does not take the easy way out in explaining this upsurge of juvenile violence. The show is, in fact, an essay about what it means to grow up, and the sometimes unpleasant necessity of parents to practice impulse-control among the disenfranchised young. “Progeny” is a latter day version of *Star Trek*’s “Charlie X,” with a violent boy (influenced by nonhumans) facing a choice in his adolescence: whether to be a moral human or a sociopathic monster. In nice, if ambiguous terms, *Prey* sets up the argument that the boy can always *choose* to be either good or bad, either victim or predator, a monster or a man, even if his genetic makeup points him in one specific direction. The show also set up a chilling climax. A group of the amoral children boarded a school bus together, like a scene out of *Village of the Damned* (1960), and were shuttled away to a future where their violence might one day erupt again.

The prominent romance between Tom and Sloan on *Prey* also had some socially redeeming value. It was clearly meant to be a metaphor for interracial romance in our society, and one episode (“Veil”) reveals how Tom’s *Homo dominant* mother disdains humans and looks down her nose at Tom for betraying his own kind. Prejudice, it seems, does not belong solely to the evolutionarily challenged human beings. The series is no morality play, but socially relevant themes were brought up in entertaining ways.

Lest one think that *Prey* is all paranoia and social commentary, it is helpful to remember that the

series is packed with slow motion fight sequences between Tom and other *Homo dominants* (à la the bionic shows of the mid-1970s), car chases, and gun fights. The traditional horror accouterments such as ghoulish makeup and prosthetics, monsters, and even gore, are all missing in action, but the central concept, adapted straight from *Invasion of the Body Snatchers* (1978) or John Carpenter's remake of *The Thing* (1982), successfully make *Prey* a scary show in a different way. It is decidedly different from *The X-Files*, *Dark Skies*, and its modern brethren, and that alone gives the show some room to maneuver and experiment.

## CAST AND CREDITS

*Cast:* Debra Messing (Sloan Parker); Vincent Ventresca (Dr. Ed Tate); Adam Storke (Tom Daniels); Frankie Faison (Detective Ray Peterson); Larry Drake (Dr. Walter Attwood).

*Credits:* *Executive Producer:* Charlie Craig. *Producer:* Donald Marcus. *Supervising Producer:* Jeremy R. Littman. *Executive Producer:* William Schmidt. *Producer:* Phil Parslow. *Created by:* William Schmidt. *Editors (various episodes):* Lee Haxell, Anthony Pinker. *Music:* Mark Morgan. *Director of Photography:* Ronn Schmidt. *Associate Producer:* Drew Matich. *Executive Story Editor:* Laurence Andries. *Production Designer:* James J. Agazzi. *Unit Production Manager:* Neal Ahern. *First Assistant Director:* Stephen Lofaro. *Second Assistant Director:* Cynthi Stefannoni. *Executive in Charge of Casting:* Barbara Miller. *Casting:* Lorna Johnson. *Costume Designer:* Betty Madden. *Costume Supervisor:* Tina Ficaro. *Makeup Artist:* Tim Miguel, Melanie Levitt. *Hairstylist:* Dianne Roberson. *Set Decorator:* Kristin Peterson. *Property Manager:* Lynda Reiss. *Sound Mixer:* Walter Anderson. *Camera Operator:* Rich Cantu. *Postproduction Supervisor:* Tim Scanlon. *Rerecording Mixer:* Neil Brady, Joe Citarella. *Music Editor:* Chris McGeary. *Supervising Sound Editor:* Bob Redpath. *Lab Equipment Provided by:* Beckman Instruments, Inc. *Color:* Four Media Inc. Lars Thorwald, Inc., Edelson Productions in association with Warner Brothers Television.

## EPISODE GUIDE

**1. "Existence"** Written by William Schmidt; Directed by Peter O'Fallon; airdate: January 15, 1998; *Guest Cast:* Roger Howarth (Randall Lynch); Natalija Nogulich (Dr. Ann Coulter); Don Martin (Prosecutor); Joyce Guy (Judge); Ivon Allen (Defense Attorney); Nathan Dono (Guard); Robert Lynch (Cop); Catherine Grace (Receptionist); Scott Wolff (Officer); Mark Ankeny (FBI Agent).

Randall Lynch, a serial killer and rapist, is apprehended by the police after a string of bloody murders. Scientists Sloan Parker, Ed Tate, and world-famous geneticist Ann Coulter discover a genetic anomaly in Lynch's blood, and Dr. Coulter is soon found murdered in her genetics lab at Whitney University. Sloan, Coulter's apprentice, suspects that Lynch is somehow responsible for the murder, but stumbles into something much more important: the inmate is actually a member of a new species, one with a 1.6 percent difference from human beings. Soon, Sloan and Ed find themselves looking over their shoulders at FBI agents, policemen, and others who may or may not be part of this new, dangerous, and apparently emotionless species.

**2. "Discovery"** Written by Chris Levinson; From a story by Charlie Craig and Jeremy R. Littman; Directed by Dan Lerner; airdate: January 22, 1998; *Guest Cast:* Alexandra Hedison (Attractive Woman); Roger Howarth (Randall Lynch); Steven Burr (Detective Masters); Christopher Michael (SWAT Officer); Kathryn Joston (Landlady); Bari K. Willerford (Guard); Michelle Durham (Cute Girl); Christopher Titus (Marksman); Anna B. Choi (Reporter #1); Sonja Parks (Reporter #2); Tom

Bailey (Guard); Lawrence McNeal III (Hospital Security Guard).

After meeting with Tom Daniels, a turncoat among the new species who seems to be developing human emotions, Sloan attempts to get some answers out of the incarcerated Randall Lynch. When her interrogation fails, Dr. Attwood goes behind her back to conduct a physical examination of the prisoner and announce the existence of the new species to the world. Lynch murders another doctor and then escapes captivity. Meanwhile, Attwood's tests prove that Lynch and his kind have a high metabolism, and possibly ESP.

**3. "Pursuit"** Written by Laurence Andries; Directed by Stephen Cragg; airdate: January 29, 1998; *Guest Cast:* Roger Howarth (Randall Lynch); Alexandra Hedison (Attractive Woman); Marc Gomes, Amy Daniels (Dark-Haired Girl); Megahn Perry (Timid Girl); Nynno Ahli (Muscular Man); Skip Stellrecht (Attendant); Elizabeth Maynard (News Anchor).

Randall Lynch is still on the loose, and Sloan has learned from Tom that the new species' goal is not just survival, but the total domination of humanity. Sloan also gets definitive proof of the new species' sixth sense: one in which they can detect the neural impulses and emotions of humans nearby. Lynch steals a pick-up truck, captures two teenage hitchhikers, and takes them to a mountain hideaway where his people kill humans and horde their clothes, watches, glasses, and other accouterments. Ed, Tom, and Sloan rescue the terrified teen girls and briefly capture Randall Lynch before he promises that this "is only the beginning," and then immolates himself.

**4. "Origins"** Written by Donald Marcus; Directed by Bill Corcoran; airdate: February 5, 1998; *Guest Cast:* Susanna Thompson (Tom's Mother); Alexandra Hedison (Attractive Woman); Al Rodrigo (Tony); David Soderholm (Bill).

Ed, Tom, and Sloan fly to Qaxaco in southern Mexico, the birthplace of the new master species, after Tom's people flee L.A., causing 108 fires in the process. In the desert, the trio digs up a corpse of a young, nonhuman female with four uteruses! Later that night, Tom unearths a strange, cylindrical pillar in the desert floor (really an entrance to a subterranean village founded in 1964) at the same time he experiences flashbacks of a beautiful woman in a white gown. Dr. Attwood soon rescues Ed and Sloan from a nighttime attack and reveals he has been working for the federal government, while Tom seeks to sort out his visions and ends up coming face-to-face with a mother he last saw some sixteen years ago.

**5. "Revelations"** Written by Laurence Andries and Chris Levinson; Directed by Jim Charleston; Airdate: February 19, 1998; *Guest Cast:* Vanessa Bell Calloway (Grace Peterson); Alexandra Hedison (Attractive Woman); Shelley Morrison, Irene Olga Lopez, James Handy (Lieutenant Quinn); Aymore De Llano (Danielle); Lucky Luciano (Man); Robert Keith (Man #2); Robert Madredi (Truck Driver).

Sloan cares for Tom after he has learned that the tattoo on his back symbolizes that he has been chosen as a leader of his kind. Meanwhile, Attwood has recovered the strange pillar from the desert, what Sloan refers to as the "Rosetta stone" of the new species. Sloan and Ray search out immigrants from Qaxaca who may not be human, and are nearly killed in a drive-by shooting while Ed and Tom become friends. They examine the pillar together, discover an energy source emanating from inside it, and realize that the artifact marks certain important celestial positions.

**6. "Infiltration"** Written by Charlie Craig and Jeremy R. Littman; Directed by Winrich Kolbe;

airdate: March 5, 1998; *Guest Cast*: Vanessa Bell Calloway (Grace Peterson); Dwier Brown (Roer Young); James Handy (Lt. Quinn); James Morrison (Lewis); Megahn Perry (Kelly); Jennifer Sommerfield (Lisa); Bart McCarthy (Alley Man); Lawrence A. Mondley (Negotiator); Elizabeth Maynard (News Reporter #1); Lara Newton (News Reporter #2).

The pillar has been destroyed by its builders, but not before Ed has deciphered a portion of the artifact which indicates that something big is being planned for the second week of October—to coincide with the passage of a comet. At the same time, the new species launches a campaign of terror by blowing up a city bar utilizing a new explosive compound. While Tom and Sloan try to track down a reporter who may have information on the new species, Ed talks down a suicidal girl, Kelly, who had a run-in with Randall Lynch at the cave prior to his immolation. Tom realizes that a new species “mentor,” a particularly vicious man called Lewis, is behind the recent murders and he suggests using the reporter as bait to eliminate the threat.

**7. “Transformations”** Written by Donald Marcus; Directed by Jim Contner; airdate: March 12, 1998; *Guest Cast*: James Morrison (Lewis); Susanna Thompson (Tom’s Mother); Jennifer Sommerfield (Lisa); Alexandra Hedison (Attractive Woman); Megahn Perry (Kelly Hammond); Maria Rangel (Anna DeLeon); Jordan Lund (Martin); Thomas Mills (Guard).

Sloan is kidnapped by Tom’s mentor, Lewis, and a trap is set for the turncoat Tom. Ed discovers that Kelly’s DNA has been altered after discovering a rash on her neck. Instead of murdering his captives, Lewis frames Sloan and Tom for murder, forcing them to go on the run. Despite Ed’s best efforts, Kelly dies after her genetic structure has been altered to mimic that of the new species.

**8. “Veil”** Written by Charlie Craig and Jeremy R. Littman; Directed by Martha Mitchell; airdate: March 19, 1998; *Guest Cast*: Susanna Thompson (Tom’s Mother); Michael Bofshever (Mr. Hammond); Wendy Schenker (Mrs. Hammond); James Morrison (Lewis); Megahn Perry (Kelly); Maree Cheatham.

Sloan and Tom flee from the law after being set-up by Lewis, and Ed Tate discovers at Kelly’s funeral that something is still alive inside the teen’s body. Tom and Sloan almost become intimate, but the police break into their motel room and apprehend Sloan. Attwood and Tate conduct an autopsy on Kelly and learn of a parasite inside her brain which is inching towards her ear. A posthypnotic suggestion from Lewis turns Tom’s loyalties away from Sloan and the lab at the same time that Attwood determines that the parasitic tick inside Kelly is capable of conducting gene therapy which can turn the human host into a member of the new species.

**9. “Collaborations”** Written by Laurence Andries and Chris Levinson; Directed by Ian Toynton; airdate: June 11, 1998; *Guest Cast*: Sam Anderson (Ian Copeland); Alexandra Hedison (Attractive Woman); Kaj-Erik Eriksen (Shane); Cristine Rose (Principal Cook); Hayley Palmer (Little Girl).

While Ed and Sloan visit a school in Bardsdale where school children are being altered by the new species, Tom meets the “Attractive Woman” and learns that she and Attwood are being provided insider information from an unknown confederate of the new species. Ed finds evidence of genocide when he discovers the children’s immune systems are being destroyed so as to kill the next generation of humans. The damage is being wrought by highly advanced bio-technology and nanites spread through Orange Max juice boxes.

**10. “Sleeper”** Written by Donald Marcus; Directed by Vern Gillum; airdate: June 18, 1998; *Guest Cast*: Sam Anderson (Ian Copeland); Kaj-Erik Eriksen (Shane); Dorian Gregory (New Species); Jessica Cushman (Dr. Kristen Hale); Dennis Bailey.

Ed has been abducted by Professor Copeland, a member of the new species who has developed the immune system-destroying nanite. Copeland has taken Ed to a base in the Alaskan tundra, where he shows him his laboratory. Ed escapes from captivity, and Sloan, Tom, and Attwood trace him there. Tom and Sloan are captured after discovering Copeland’s plan to revive Spanish influenza, which in 1918 killed thirty million people. The deadly flu begins to claim lives in Alaska, including members of the new species, and Copeland proposes a truce to develop a vaccine.

**11. “Vengeance”** Written by Laurence Andries; Directed by Bill Corcoran; airdate: June 25, 1998; *Guest Cast*: Roger Howarth (Randall Lynch/John Doe); Jordan Lund (Martin); Rob Eld (Guard #1); Melissa Chan (Reporter #1); David E. Willis (Reporter #2).

While visiting Ed in the hospital, Sloan learns from Attwood that Tom has been murdered by his own kind. When Attwood suggests taking the war to the new species, Sloan sees it as an opportunity for revenge. Amazingly, Tom shows up alive and well at Sloan’s apartment, which leads the team to conclude that somehow the new species has mastered an advanced cloning technique. The person behind the death of the Tom clone may be none other than Randall Lynch, or a Randall Lynch clone, which means that the new species has had cloning capability for at least thirty years.

**12. “Progeny”** Written by Donald Marcus; Story by James Halpern; Directed by Terence O’Hara; airdate: July 2, 1998; *Guest Cast*: Michelle Joyner (Rachel Taylor); Vincent Berry, Patrick Corman, Brian McNamara, Tim Redwine (Todd Cameron); Elizabeth Maynard (Lydia Holcomb); Garrett Finley (Willie Reynolds); John Kidwell (Joey Luck).

Little Kevin is tired of being picked on by bigger kids and one afternoon he suddenly goes on the offensive: utilizing his new species’ strength to help him commit horrible violence. At the lab, Attwood worries that the national escalation of violence in elementary age children may be a secret plot to destroy humanity, so Sloan and Tom investigate and meet Kevin’s parents. DNA testing reveals that Kevin is of the new species, even though both of his parents are human. Soon however, Sloan learns that Mr. Taylor isn’t Kevin’s real father, and Attwood finally names the new species: *Homo dominants*.

**13. “Deliverance” (Part I)** Written by William Schmidt; Directed by Bill Corcoran; airdate: July 9, 1998; *Guest Cast*: Alexandra Hedison (Attractive Woman); D.B. Woodside (Mark); Timothy Dale Agee (Jerry).

The *Homo dominant* grows more bold in its plans for the eradication of the human race as loyalties are tested, revealed, and twisted.



*Charmed* (1998–)

## CRITICAL RECEPTION

“Divide three cool powers: bitchiness, wit and flakiness ... Each episode a new opportunity to sort out family dysfunctions, while incidentally quashing villains with inferior hairdos.”—*Newsweek*: “Hollywood’s Real Witch Hunt,” November 2, 1998, page 8.

“a rather damp affair, a bland mixture of *Beverly Hills 90210* and *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* that struggles unsuccessfully to find a personality of its own. *Charmed* has witchcraft, but precious little magic ... the three actresses come across as interchangeably snippy.”—Robert Bianco, *U.S.A. Today*: “*Charmed* Looks for Magic in Stars,” October 7, 1998, page 3D.

“*Charmed* is almost quaint, with Doherty acquitting herself well and the production playing with an engaging spark ... *Charmed* has an entertaining little way about it, with Spelling and company mostly striking a solid balance between escapist slap-shtick and mild horror ... [it] isn’t terribly concerned with issues of believability, relatability and self parody...”—Ray Richmond, *Variety*, October 5–11, 1998, page 33.

“you don’t need any special powers to see why *Charmed* is a hit. It has the campy sci-fi vibe and the girl-power message of *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* mixed with the soapy sexiness of *Melrose Place*.”—Janet Weeks, *TV Guide*: “Charmed Life,” December 12–18, 1998, page 23.

## FORMAT

Described aptly by many critics as *Charlie’s Angels* (1976-81) meets *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, Aaron Spelling’s *Charmed* is an hour-long light-hearted horror program following the adventures of the three Halliwell girls (all in their mid-20s) who discover in the premiere episode (“Something Wicca This Way Comes”) that they are actually powerful witches known as “the Charmed Ones” who must “protect the innocent.” Along with its overt horror notes, *Charmed* highlights the day-to-day and romantic adventures of its three beautiful leads.

The *Charmed* story opens as Prue (Shannen Doherty) and Piper (Holly Marie Combs) welcome their errant sister Phoebe (Alyssa Milano) back to San Francisco and their gorgeous Victorian home (which belonged to their grandmother). The curious Phoebe soon discovers the mysterious “Book of Shadows” in the attic and before long all three Halliwells learn they possess special powers of witchcraft. The ditzy, visionless Phoebe now has the power of prophecy and premonition. The aggressive, defensive Prue is armed with telekinesis, and the kindhearted go-between and peace-making Piper is capable of freezing time for a few seconds. Adjusting to their new lives as witches is difficult for the Halliwell women, and made more so by the fact that Prue is dating a San Francisco police inspector, Andy Trudeau (T.W. King)!

Each week on *Charmed*, a WB Network “original drama,” the three girls must battle all forms of evil including warlocks (“Something Wicca This Way Comes”), youth-sucking demons (“I’ve Got You Under My Skin”), fear-sucking demons (“From Fear to Eternity”), evil witches (“The Fourth Sister,”

“The Witch Is Back”), as well as protect the innocent both living (“The Wedding from Hell”) and deceased (“Dead Man Dating”). Against this supernatural backdrop, the Halliwell sisters learn dramatic life lessons. In “From Fear to Eternity,” the emotionally-stingy Prue learns to say “I love you” to her sisters, and in “Thank You for Not Morphing” all three girls must forgive the absentee father who abandoned them, and so on.

*Charmed*, which first aired Wednesday nights at 9:00 P.M. in the 1998–1999 season, features some predictable elements week-to-week. Each opening sequence (following the first commercial) features popular songs from notable and “hip” recording artists such as Jewel (“The Wendigo”), Natalie Imbruglia (“I’ve Got You Under My Skin”), Sarah McLachlan, Royal Crown Revue, Eve (“Feats of Clay”), Brooke Ramel, Chasing Furies, Khaleel (“From Fear to Eternity”), the Cranberries, Citizen King (“Déjà Vu All Over Again”), and Elysian Fields and Uma (“The Fourth Sister”). This blending of pop TV with pop music was also an important element of other contemporary WB hits in the late ’90s including *Dawson’s Creek* and *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*. In addition to the requisite top forty tune, audiences of *Charmed*’s first season could always expect Andy and his partner Morris (a wasted Dorian Gregory of *Prey*) to become involved on whatever case the Halliwells were currently embroiled in. One nice running joke on the program involves the flighty Phoebe, who cannot hold down a steady job to save her life. She was a waitress in “I’ve Got You Under My Skin,” a hotel lobby psychic in “Dead Man Dating,” a catering assistant in “The Wedding from Hell,” Prue’s underling at the auction house in “The Wendigo” and a real-estate office receptionist in “From Fear to Eternity.”

Recurring settings on Year One of *Charmed* include “Quake,” the busy and trendy restaurant Piper manages, and Buckland’s Auction House, where Prue found a job after the pilot. Recurring characters in the first season include Leo (Brian Krause), the hunky handyman to the Halliwell sisters who is actually a male witch known as a “White Lighter,” and Prue’s evil employers: Rex Buckland (Neil Roberts) and Hannah (Leigh Allyn-Baker). In the second season, Piper will reportedly have her own club to manage, so settings are changing.

## HISTORY

If ever a TV show could be accused of opportunism, Aaron Spelling’s 1998 horror-drama *Charmed* would be at the top of the list. This WB horror series takes no chances with originality or progressive concepts. Instead, it trades almost exclusively on fads, trends, and the good looks of its beautiful stars. It echoes the in-vogue ’70s nostalgia sweeping the nation (evidenced by the 1998 Fox series *That ’70s Show*) by regurgitating rather precisely the character troika of Spelling’s seventies jiggle classic *Charlie’s Angels* (with three beautiful women combating the forces of evil) and even setting an episode in that “hip” decade (“That ’70s Episode”).

Furthermore, *Charmed* exploits the trendy late ’90s popularity of witchcraft and the occult by joining the ranks of productions such as the feature films *The Craft* (1996) which also featured sexy young witches in the persons of Neve Campbell and Fairuza Balk, *Practical Magic* (1998) starring Sandra Bullock, Aidan Quinn, and Nicole Kidman, *Simply Irresistible* starring Sarah Michelle Gellar, and the highly successful TV series *Sabrina the Teenage Witch* (1996–).

Lastly, *Charmed* picks up none too subtly on the “girl power” themes of Joss Whedon’s exemplary *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, a kindred spirit on the WB network, and *Charmed* even hired *Buffy* monster makeup man John Vulich to create its weekly demons. In TV, similarity does not breed contempt so much as it breeds success, and *Charmed*’s familiar formula almost instantly created a hit. When the

series premiered in the fall of 1998, it drew the WB's highest ratings for a regular program premiere, even out-drawing the second season opening of Kevin Williamson's talky coming-of-age saga, *Dawson's Creek*.<sup>1</sup> As of this writing, *Charmed* has also been renewed for a second season when far worthier shows such as *Millennium*, *Strange World*, and *Brimstone* failed to survive the grueling 1998–1999 season.

Much of the early publicity concerning *Charmed* involved casting. Shannen Doherty, former star of *Beverly Hills 90210* (1990– ) had become famous for her on-and-off-stage shenanigans, and rumors had flown fast and loose that she had been fired from the *90210* series by producer Aaron Spelling. So, when Spelling and Doherty joined forces again for *Charmed*, it was a pop-culture media event the equivalent of an Arafat-Netanyahu handshake, as each party bent over backwards to suggest that there had *never* been any real animosity between them. The fact that Shannen Doherty, a perceived Hollywood witch, would be playing a real witch on TV was an irony not lost on several reporters, and much of the early buzz suggested that *Charmed* might very well be a camp hoot.

*Charmed* faced another brief casting problem in its early days. Actress Lori Rom, who was to have played Phoebe, was replaced after the pilot (which had to be reshot) by the more well-known Alyssa Milano. With Milano in place as the third in the troika, *Charmed* boasted a line-up worthy of the original *Charlie's Angels*: Shannen Doherty, Holly Marie Combs (of *Dr. Giggles* [1992] and *Picket Fences* [1992-96]), and Milano.

In part, *Charmed* slid through its first season on its good looks. In addition to its beautiful leads, it was smart enough to cast interesting cult guest stars to add visual support to the beautiful main trio. A bevy of lovely (and familiar) women graced the series including *Halloween IV: The Return of Michael Myers* and *Halloween V: The Revenge of Michael Myers* star Danielle Harris in “The Fourth Sister,” Stacy Haiduk (*Kindred: The Embraced*, *Brimstone*) in “Feats of Clay,” *American Gothic*'s sultry Brenda Bakke in “The Power of Two,” and *General Hospital*'s Finola Hughes in “That '70s Episode.” *Charmed* was also packed wall-to-wall with testosterone-laden hunks for the Halliwell girls to romance. Brian Krause (*Sleepwalkers* [1992]) had the recurring role of Leo, and Billy Wirth (“The Witch Is Back”), Victor Brown (“Feats of Clay”), Shawn Christian (“Is There a Woogy in the House?”), and Raphael Sbarge (“Blind Sided”) all showed off their handsome wares just enough to make the teenage female audience swoon. Billy Drago, David Carradine, and Jeff Kober (*Kindred: The Embraced*) took the opposite route and showed up to menace the Charmed Ones. All in all, *Charmed*'s first season went by smoothly, and the series was an uninteresting, uncontroversial venture not dissimilar in tone to *The Bionic Woman*, *Wonder Woman*, or any other seventies adventure in which beautiful women hid a funny secret about “super powers.”

Although 1998–1999 saw much attention focused on horror and occult in the media, and *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* even had two episodes yanked from the air (“Earshot” and “Graduation Day, Part II”) following the Columbine tragedy, *Charmed* avoided any such controversy by charting its own rather bland and unchallenging course. Each week, the Halliwell girls protected the innocent, romanced the hunks, and defeated showy demons in a neat special effects finale. Even though the protagonists were witches, *Charmed* escaped focus from censoring media watchers because the show reduced witchcraft to an inoffensive, “magic” power that could be harnessed at the right moment and ignored the rest of the time. One episode, “I've Got You Under My Skin,” even made a special point of demonstrating that the Halliwell girls, despite their true nature as witches, were still *good Christians* who could walk into a church unharmed and undisturbed. Although spells were harnessed to vanquish evil on

*Charmed*, they had more the feel of a home economics project (as they were often whipped up in the Halliwell kitchen!) than any significant mingling with “dark” or elemental forces. Perhaps this was the intention, however. By being so resolutely flat, *Charmed* opened the doorway (just a little) for the mass acceptance of the wiccan way as a legitimate “alternate life style.” As creator Connie Burges stated, regarding the wicca connection and its acceptance in modern America:

In my mind, I like to think we are all becoming more open to entertaining things in our world. Maybe we’re on the path to becoming better people.<sup>2</sup>

Whatever the intention, *Charmed* was so black-and-white a drama (gorgeous good girls beat ugly, evil bad guys), that none but the most ardent arch-conservative could have objected to the proceedings. In this case, beautiful faces, beautiful bodies, beautiful fashions, and excellent special effects made up for the uninspired writing from the likes of frequent *Tales from the Darkside* scribe Edithe Swensen, and *Charmed* thrived. At the end of the first season, it appeared some changes were in the offing, as Andy was killed off, and Piper quit her job at Quake. Schedule-wise, *Charmed*’s second season is to air on WB Thursday nights instead of Wednesdays. That placement could be as dangerous to the Halliwell witches as warlocks, because the show will be pitted against the NBC powerhouse, *Friends*.

### CRITICAL COMMENTARY

*Charmed* recalls that old axiom that there are no new stories under the sun, only old ones that can be combined and shuffled in new ways. Unfortunately, the witch’s brew here, a concoction of oft-told tales, seems more derivative than innovative even after the contents of the cauldron have been thoroughly stirred. *Charmed*’s major weakness is its derivative scripts, and the first season aptly demonstrates an alarming trend towards rehashing the plots of popular movies. Specifically, “Dream Sorcerer” pits the stalwart Halliwells against a killer who stalks Prue in her dreams. The kicker is that the wounds picked up in dreams materialize in reality, and that if you die in your dream, you die in “real” life as well. Of course, this is the central idea informing Wes Craven’s classic *A Nightmare on Elm Street* (1984). The Dream Sorcerer of *Charmed* is a poor substitute for Freddy Krueger, and this episode of *Charmed* even has the audacity to set a scene at a dream clinic, an exact repeat of a similar scene in *Elm Street*! “The Witch Is Back” takes the plot of the Julian Sands horror film *Warlock* (1989) as its template, featuring the story of a witch-hunter who follows a witch through the ages, into the present. In *Charmed*, the dynamic of *Warlock* is flip-flopped and the witch is the protagonist rather than the antagonist, which is a representation of what passes for inspiration on this show. Perhaps the most blatant steal of all is seen in the episode “The Truth Is Out There ... And it Hurts.” In this entry, a villain returns to the present from the future to kill an unborn child before he can grow up to become the savior of mankind. If this sounds familiar, it should ... it is the exact plot of James Cameron’s *The Terminator* (1984)!

In a much more general way, *Charmed* attempts to ape the sly, self-referential style of the *Scream* films by throwing in, seemingly willy-nilly, jokes about various popular films and television programs. In the first season, *Evil Dead 2: Dead by Dawn* (“I’ve Got You Under My Skin”), *Touched by an Angel* (“Wedding from Hell”), *Twin Peaks* (“Is There a Woogy in the House?”) and even *Jaws* (“That ’70s Episode”) all get nods, but the humor is missing from these references because of awkward placement. The faux-witty dialogue falls flat from flaccid delivery, as if the stars of the series don’t quite get the jokes. And, sadly, acting is a problem here. Milano, Doherty, and especially Combs are competent performers who have done good work in the past (again, especially Combs), but

they are not served well by the scripts in this series. Doherty gets to play defensive and angry, Milano plays ditzy and sarcastic, and Combs is frequently seen to be harried and irritable, but beyond these very superficial qualities, the characters remain empty, lacking the resonance of a Buffy and Willow, or even an Ian and Randi.

Perhaps most disturbingly, *Charmed* credits its three heroines with virtually no intelligence whatsoever. They are depicted as powerful witches, but they have to do almost nothing to defeat evil but read passages from the Book of Shadows. *Charmed* is alarmingly like “Witchcraft for Dummies,” without any real interest or curiosity in the breadth of the wiccan way or witchcraft in general. Indeed, rhymes from the Book of Shadows (“the power of three will set us free...”) vanquish villains with a minimum of tussling (or conflict) in “Something Wicca This Way Comes,” “I’ve Got You Under My Skin,” “Thank You For Not Morphing,” “Love Hurts,” “Déjà Vu All Over Again” and others. Buffy Summers is a likable character whom audiences root for because she *acts* in a heroic manner. She confronts evil and defeats it by physical prowess, strength of will, strategy, and plenty of determination. Mulder and Scully are praiseworthy and likable heroes because they question, prod, and push their way towards a victory over evil by using their (vastly opposite) smarts. Even the sometimes enigmatic Frank Black of *Millennium* seems heroic and active because he must interpret the visions he experiences if he is to prevent another terrible crime. The girls of *Charmed* fail in this regard. They must simply know how to navigate a book index if they are to succeed over evil! They use their all-powerful book, lock their hands together and in rote, almost cheerleaderlike fashion, recite a pertinent passage. With such a passive act of heroism, the special effects show then commences and takes over, but there is rarely any real excitement or suspense in *Charmed* because it all seems too easy and convenient. Witchcraft for dummies indeed.

*Charmed* is also unduly formulaic, which succeeds only in fostering boredom. Every episode commences with a lovely but time-consuming montage of San Francisco, usually the same five or six views of the Golden Gate Bridge, the trolleys, and the Halliwell house, but edited in a different sequence. Every show includes some cliché police procedural scene in which Andy and Morris puzzle over a crime scene which is obviously related to a supernatural event. And finally, every episode inevitably brings in a new hunk, who for one reason or another, cannot sustain a relationship with the beautiful Halliwells. On top of this basic plot is overlaid the horror, almost as an afterthought: an innocent to be protected, a demon to be vanquished. Four of five times, this works, but repetition really sinks *Charmed*.

When *Scream* was released in 1996, film executives all over Hollywood took notice that teenage girls comprised much of the repeat audience. It is not hard to see why that is so: Neve Campbell played a strong, attractive, heroic role model. She was a young woman who faced personal adversity and real danger with composure and wit. Joss Whedon’s *Buffy* is imbued with many of the same qualities, only more so. She balances the demands of life (school, work, home) adroitly and intelligently, yet never gives up her right to “girlhood.” *Charmed* attempts to strike the same empowering chord but is much less successful. Though the stated theme of the series is that sisters must stick together through thick and thin, the real message seems far less positive than that.

What each episode of *Charmed* is really about is the search for a man. Week in and week out, the Halliwells struggle with the fact that they have no regular men in their lives. That yearning suggests, at least in part, that a man is required if a woman is to feel whole or complete. Is that any kind of “girl power” message to send to the next generation? If changes in its format really are in the offing for

*Charmed*'s second season, one can only hope that the writers go back to *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* or *Scream* or even *The X-Files* to remember what makes those productions work so well.

*Charmed* is a horror show with almost no real horror, despite the presence of warlocks and monsters almost every week. Suspense, scares, surprise, shocks, and terror are all missing from this brew. Each episode features some genuinely amazing special optical effects (watch the incredible destruction of the Grimlocks in "Blind Sided," for instance) and demon makeup, but the edgy, biting, and genuinely horrific moments of a show like *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* have not been adopted in any kind of successful or even intriguing way on this Aaron Spelling production. *Charmed* lives to a second season, but that is not necessarily a good thing.

## CAST AND CREDITS

*Cast:* Shannen Doherty (Prue Halliwell); Holly Marie Combs (Piper Halliwell); T.W. King (Inspector Andy Trudeau); Dorian Gregory (Morris); Alyssa Milano (Phoebe Halliwell).

*Credits:* *Created by:* Constance M. Burge. *Coordinating Producer:* Robert Del Valle. *Producers:* Sheryl J. Anderson, Les Sheldon. *Executive Producers:* Brad Kern, Constance M. Burge, Aaron Spelling, E. Duke Vincent. *Consulting Producers:* Jonathan Levin, Tony Blake, Paul Jackson. *Executive Story Editors:* Javier Grillo-Marxuach, Michael Perricone, Greg Elliot. *Story Editors (various episodes):* Chris Levinson, Zack Estrin, Edithe Swensen. *Associate Producer:* Peter Chomsky. *Music (various episodes):* Jay Gruska, Tim Truman. *Casting:* Victoria Huff. *Directors of Photography (various episodes):* Tom Del Ruth, Michael Negrin, Geoff Schaaf. *Production Designer:* Dean Mitzner. *Editors (various episodes):* Derek Berlatsky, Dianne Ryder-Rehnohds, Alan Shefland, William Turro. *Unit Production Manager:* Patrick McKee, Robert Dell Valle. *First Assistant Director:* Richard Denault, Timothy Lonsdale. *Key Second Assistant Director:* Nancy Henkle Green, Marty Mericka. *Camera Operator:* Buddy Fries. *First Assistant Camera:* Lex Rawlings. *Chief Lighting Technician:* Walter Stewart. *Assistant Chief Lighting Technician:* Mark Meisenheimer. *Set Designer:* Cate Bangs. *Set Decorator:* Donald W. Crafft. *Leadperson:* Rocky Slaymaker. *Property Master:* Roger Montesano. *Assistant Property Master:* Christy McGeachy. *Script Supervisor:* Susan Lowitz. *Sound Mixer:* James LaRue. *Location Manager:* Bob Boyle. *Transportation Coordinator:* Dave Bassett. *Production Coordinator:* Jill Barnet Taylor. *Production Accountant:* Sharon Taksel. *Key Grip:* Marlin Hall. *Costume Designer:* Holly Harris Campbell. *Costumer Supervisor:* Jake Jacobs. *Key Makeup Artist:* Kathryn Miles Kelly. *Key Hairstylist:* Enid Arias. *Special Effects Makeup:* John Vulich. *Best Boy Grip:* Ray Michels. *Construction Coordinator:* Michael Caiozzo. *Stunt Coordinator:* Ernie Orsatti. *Special Effects Coordinator:* John Gray. *Executive Assistant:* Renate Kamer. *Casting Associate:* Jeffrey Roth. *Assistant to Executive Producers:* Aviva Barraclough, Max Joffe, Chele Knapp. *Assistant Editor:* Wendi Raderman. *Music Editor:* Nino Cenutiron. *Supervising Sound Editor:* Rich Steven. *Rerecording Mixers:* Larry Benjamin, Bruce Michaels, Eddie Gilroy. *Film and Electronics Laboratory:* Laser Pacific Media. *Lenses and Panaflex Cameras:* Panavision. *Digital Sound Editing and Mixing:* Laser Pacific Media. *Digital Visual Effects:* Encore Video, CBS Animation Group. *Executive in Charge of Production:* Gail M. Patterson. *Executive in Charge of Postproduction:* Kenneth Miller. *From:* Spelling Television, a Subsidiary of Spelling Entertainment Group, Inc.

## EPISODE GUIDE

**1. "Pilot" / "Something Wicca This Way Comes"** Written by Constance M. Burge; Directed by John

T. Kretchmer; airdate: October 7, 1998; *Guest Cast*: Eric Scott Woods (Jeremy Burns); Matthew Ashford (Roger); Chris Flanders (Chef Moore); Lonnie Partridge (Woman); Charmaine Cruz (Admitting Nurse); Hugh Holub (Pharmacist); Francesca Cappucci (News Reporter).

In scenic San Francisco, a cloaked murderer is killing witches with a ceremonial dagger which is said to steal their powers. Elsewhere in town, the beautiful Halliwell sisters Prue and Piper are surprised by the return of their flaky sister, Phoebe, who was living in New York City. The three Halliwells share space in their deceased grandmother's Victorian home and learn that they are powerful witches with the power to freeze time (Piper), see the future (Phoebe), and move objects telekinetically (Prue). The serial killer is actually a warlock out to steal the power of the Halliwell sisters, but the girls defend themselves with the mysterious Book of Shadows and the "power of three."

**2. "I've Got You Under My Skin"** Written by Brad Kern; Directed by John T. Kretchmer; airdate: October 14, 1998; *Guest Cast*: Michael Philip, Neil Roberts (Rex Buckland); Leigh-Allyn Baker (Hannah); Marc Schelton, Bailey Luetgert, Barbara Pilavin, Cynthia King, Julie Araskog (Darlene); Tamara Lee Krinsky (Tia); Ben Caswell (Max Jones); Ralph Manza (Elderly Man); Todd Feder (Clerk); Lou Glenn (Carpenter).

Although the Halliwell sisters have promised not to use their special abilities, Phoebe has been using the power of premonition to target possible boyfriends at the restaurant where Piper works as a chef. While Prue renews her sexual relationship with Andy, Piper fears that her status as a witch will prevent her from entering a church without being struck down by lightning. Meanwhile, four women have been abducted in town and Prue lands a job at Buckland Auction House. Phoebe finds herself dating a professional photographer named Stefan who also happens to be a youth-sucking demon called Javna.

**3. "Thank You For Not Morphing"** Written by Chris Levinson and Zack Estrin; Directed by Ellen Pressman; airdate: October 21, 1998; *Guest Cast*: Markus Flanagan (Marshall); Eric Matheny (Fritz); Mariah O'Brien (Cinda); James Dineen; Brian Krause (Leo); Tony Denison (Victor Halliwell).

Three nasty shapeshifters are in town to steal the Book of Shadows. At the same time, the girls' father, Victor Halliwell, returns home. He abandoned the family many years ago and Prue has not forgiven him for missing out on her childhood. While the sisters work out their feelings for their errant, con-man father, the shapeshifters get closer to reaching their goal.

**4. "Dead Man Dating"** Written by Javier Grillo-Marxuach; Directed by Richard Compton; airdate: October 28, 1998; *Guest Cast*: John Cho (Mark); Patricia Harty (Woman in Hotel); Elizabeth Sung (Berlitz); William Francis McGuire (Man in Hotel); Joe Hoe (Tony Wong); Todd Newton (News Man); Sherrie Rose (Susan Trudeau); Rendelle Granachia (Frankie).

While Andy and Prue plan a romantic getaway for her birthday, a young man named Mark from Chinatown is murdered by Chinese thugs. As a spirit, he seeks out Piper's assistance in bringing to justice the men who killed him. At the same time, Phoebe (in *I Dream of Jeannie* outfit) spends time as a hotel lobby psychic and ends up assisting a cranky married couple who don't really want to be helped. Prue is irritated to learn that Andy was once married, and Piper tries to save her astral friend before the Gatekeeper to hell can claim his soul.

**5. "Dream Sorcerer"** Written by Constance M. Burge; Directed by Nick Marck; airdate: November 4,

1998; *Guest Cast*: Neil Roberts (Rex Buckland); J. Robin Miller (Skye Russell); Alex Mendoza (Whitaker Berman); Tim Herzog (Hans); James O'Shea (Guy #1); Bo Clancy (Businessman); James Howell (Technician #1); Marie O'Donnell (Dr. Black); Todd Howk (ER Nurse); Trish Suhr (Paramedic #1); Douglas Spearman (Nurse).

A man relegated to a wheelchair can control the dreams of others, and even murder people while they sleep. When Prue rejects his romantic advances, the dream wizard starts to stalk her as well. Meanwhile, Phoebe and Piper, who are tired of being single, cast a spell: how to attract a lover. While Morris and Andy try to solve the mysterious murders of three women who have died in their sleep, the dream sorcerer gets closer to Prue ... and lands her in the hospital.

**6. "The Wedding from Hell"** Written by Greg Elliott and Michael Perricone; Directed by R.W. Ginty; airdate: November 11, 1998; *Guest Cast*: Sara Rose Peterson, Barbara Stock, Deeny Consiglio, Neil Roberts (Rex Buckland); Christie Lynn Smith, Leigh-Allyn Baker (Hannah); Todd Cattell, Jeffrey Hutchinson, David Moreland (Butler); James Geraldine (Justice of the Peace); Bill Ferrell (Security Guard); Phoenix Nugeny (Seamstress); Roy Abramsohn (Doctor); Thomas Crawford (Security Guard #2); Jennifer S. Badger (Bridesmaid #1); Eileen Weisinger (Bridesmaid #2); Leon Franco (Male Stripper).

Twenty years ago, Mrs. Spencer made a deal with a demon called Jade, really Hecate of the Underworld: wealth and power in exchange for the hand of her son, Elliott, in marriage. Now Elliott is planning to marry Allison, but that changes when he is bewitched by Jade, who requires a human male to produce a normal-looking demon child. Piper is catering the Spencer wedding and facing her own problem—she fears she is pregnant with Jeremy's warlock baby. Now the Halliwell sisters must stop the wedding from hell before it is too late.

**7. "The Fourth Sister"** Written by Edithe Swensen; Directed by Gil Adler; airdate: November 18, 1998; *Guest Cast*: Danielle Harris (Aviva); Brian Krause (Leo); Rebekah Carlton (Kali); Rebecca Balding (Aunt Jackie); Michael Le Blanc (Video Clerk).

While Phoebe and Piper compete for the romantic attention of Leo, their hunky handyman, a fledgling witch being controlled by a demonic force seeks to insinuate herself with the Halliwell sisters by returning their missing cat (whom she stole). The witch, Aviva, wants to be part of the family but her evil mistress, Kali, wants the Halliwell wicca powers under her command. Aviva befriends Phoebe, hoping to use her insecurities to split the power of three and replace Prue as the leader of the Charmed Ones. When her assassination attempt fails thanks to Phoebe's power of premonition, Aviva is possessed by Kali and Prue, Piper, and Phoebe must save her.

**8. "The Truth Is Out There ... And It Hurts"** Written by Zack Estrin and Chris Levinson; Directed by Jim Contner; airdate: November 25, 1998; *Guest Cast*: Brad Greenquist (Warlock); Michelle Brookhurst (Tonya Parker); Brian Krause (Leo); Leigh-Allyn Baker (Hannah); Neil Roberts (Rex Buckland); Jason Stuart, Richard Gilbert-Hill, Craig Thomas (Alex Pearson).

While Piper and Phoebe compete for Leo's affections and Prue mourns the end of her relationship with Andy, a strange murderer arrives in San Francisco with knowledge of the future. Knowing that the truth about her identity as a witch is standing between her and Andy, Prue casts a truth spell which makes it impossible for Piper, Phoebe, and all those people the Halliwells have contact with, to lie. Phoebe attempts to save a sandwich delivery girl named Tonya, whom the killer from the future is



stalking for some unknown reason. Phoebe learns that the killer is a warlock who wants to kill Tonya's unborn baby before he can grow up and develop a vaccine which will destroy all warlocks.

**9. "The Witch Is Back"** Written by Sheryl J. Anderson; Directed by Richard Denault; airdate: December 13, 1998; *Guest Cast:* Billy Wirth (Matthew Tate); Tyler Layton (Melinda Warren); Brian Krause (Leo); Neil Roberts (Rex Buckland); Leigh-Allyn Baker (Hannah); Terry Bozeman, Michael Mitz, Catherine Kwong (Waitress); Jodi Fung (TV Reporter).

In Salem in the 1600s, a beautiful witch vanquishes a sorcerer who tried to steal her powers. More than three hundred years later, Prue opens a locket which releases the devilish warlock, Matthew Tate. Now he wants the power of all three Halliwell girls and will stop at nothing to get them. Tate conspires with Rex Buckland and his assistant Hannah, both of whom have sinister ties to the occult, and the Halliwells summon the author of the Book of Shadows, Melinda Warren, to defend them.

**10. "Wicca Envy"** Written by Brad Kern and Sheryl J. Anderson; Directed by Mel Damski; airdate: January 13, 1999; *Guest Cast:* Neil Roberts (Rex Buckland); Leigh-Allyn Baker (Hannah); Brian Krause (Leo); Al Rodrigo (Jamie); Tim Stark (Super).

Rex and Hannah attempt to frame Prue for the theft of a tiara, so they can finally be rid of her. When that fails, they next try to frame her for murder. Meanwhile, Phoebe goes out on a date with Rex, and is surprised when she returns to his apartment to find that it is not exactly what it appears to be.

**11. "Feats of Clay"** Written by Michael Perricone, Greg Elliot, Chris Levinson and Zack Estrin; From a story by Javier Grillo-Marxuach; Directed by Kevin Inch; airdate: January 20, 1999; *Guest Cast:* Stacy Haiduk (Guardian of the Urn); Victor Browne (Clay); Eddie Bowz (Palmer); Allen Cutler (Doug); Niklaus Lange (Welsey); Carolyn Lowery (Shelley); Ming Lo; Cristine Rose (Claire Price); Season Moran (Customs Officer); Allan Hunt (Auctioneer);

In Cairo, Phoebe's old boyfriend Clay and two partners steal a valuable Egyptian urn ... and a curse is born. The beautiful Guardian of the Urn kills one partner, Wesley, and then pursues Clay to San Francisco and the Halliwells. Meanwhile, Piper practices her matchmaking skills on Doug and Shelley, two employees at Quake. Phoebe sticks by Clay even as Prue learns that he is a thief, and the Guardian prepares to punish him for his greed.

**12. "The Wendigo"** Written by Edithe Swensen; Directed by James L. Conway; airdate: February 3, 1999; *Guest Cast:* Jocelyn Seagrove (Special Agent Fallon); Billy Jayne (Billy); J. Karen Thomas (Harriet Lake); Charles Chun (Health Inspector); Cristine Rose (Claire Price); Richard S. Wolf (Auctioneer); Christina Milian (Terri Lake); William Dixon (E.R. Doctor).

When Piper's car breaks down near the park, she is scratched by a Wendigo, a horrible monster which devours the hearts of those whose blood is AB negative. Special Agent Fallon of the F.B.I. shows up to investigate the case with Andy at the same time that young Billy arrives in town to kill it. His fiancée, Laura, was murdered by the Wendigo, and he has learned that it fears fire. While the Wendigo seeks out new victims in the park, including Andy, Piper begins to transform into a Wendigo herself.

**13. "From Fear to Eternity"** Written by Tony Blake and Paul Jackson; Directed by Les Sheldon; airdate: February 10, 1999; *Guest Cast:* Billy Drago (Demon of Fear); Kimberly Kates (Tangela); Steve Wilder (Lucas Devane); Jodie Hanson (Zoe); Allen Cutler (Doug); Dailyn Matthews (Susan);

Evan D'Meara (Richard).

Once every thirteen hundred years, there is a universal convergence of negative energy on Friday the 13th ... and this is that year. A demon materializes in San Francisco who can kill witches by materializing their worst fears. If the demon can kill thirteen unmarried witches before midnight, he will be able to leave the underworld and wreak havoc on Earth every day of the year. Prue, Piper, and Phoebe try to warn the other witches of San Francisco before it's too late, while Prue attempts to overcome her fear of drowning.

**14. "Secrets and Guys"** Written by Constance M. Burge and Sheryl J. Anderson; Story by Brad Kern and Constance M. Burge; Directed by James A. Contner; airdate: February 17, 1999; *Guest Cast:* Brian Krause (Leo); Robert Gossett, Brad Tatum, David Netter, Will Stewart, Richard Cody.

A young boy named Max who has been kidnapped uses his powers to telepathically request help from the Halliwells. While they try to find out who and where he is, Leo returns for a visit and Prue seeks Andy's assistance on the case. Phoebe discovers that Leo is a good witch called a "White Lighter," even as Max's kidnappers force him to use his powers on a high-tech robbery. Leo has been sent back to San Francisco by his superiors, the mysterious "Founders," to help Max, but the boy's rescue is actually left to Prue.

**15. "Is There a Woogy in the House?"** Written by Chris Levinson, Zack Estrin; Directed by John T. Kretchmer; airdate: February 24, 1999; *Guest Cast:* Shawn Christian (Josh); Richard McGonagle (Doug); Cristine Rose (Claire Price), Nancy Moonves, Michael Mantell, Jennifer Rhodes (Gramms).

A workman comes to check out the Halliwell house after an earthquake and is possessed by an evil spirit he has inadvertently freed. The dark force possesses Phoebe as Prue prepares for an important dinner at the house. The evil "Woogyman" commands Phoebe to use a deadly new power, the instant materialization of objects, against her unsuspecting sisters. As the dinner party commences, the Halliwell house manifests signs of serious poltergeist inhabitation.

**16. "Which Prue Is It, Anyway?"** Written by Javier Grillo-Marxuach; Directed by John Behring; airdate: March 10, 1999; *Guest Cast:* Alex McArthur (Gabriel Statler); Shannon Sturges (Helena Statler); Bernie Kopell (Coroner); Cristine Rose (Claire Price); Mongo Brownlee (Luther Stubbs); Susan Chuang (Monique).

An evil Lord of War kills a boxing champion and drains his strength with a mystical sword. Phoebe has a vision of the same warlord killing Prue, running her through with the sword, and thereby stealing the energy of a firstborn witch. Now Phoebe and Piper must keep Prue safe, even if it means casting a special spell to increase Prue's powers. The spell has quite a different effect, however, and creates two exact duplicates of Prue.

**17. "That '70s Episode"** Written by Sheryl J. Anderson; Directed by Richard Compton; airdate: April 7, 1999; *Guest Cast:* Finola Hughes (Patty Halliwell); Andrew Jackson (Nicholas); Jennifer Rhodes (Gramms); Jake Sakson (Little Andy); Megan Corletto (Little Piper); Emmalee Thompson (Little Prue); Sally Ann Brooks (Officer in Jail); Rey Silva (Officer in Park).

A warlock claims that the girls' mother bargained away their future powers to save their lives, some twenty-four years ago. To escape the powerful villain, Piper, Prue, and Phoebe cast a spell which

propels them back in time to the year 1975 and to a Halliwell house inhabited by Gramms, their mother, and their younger selves. The Halliwell sisters must now convince their mother not to make the pact with the warlock, or they may not be able to find a way back to the present. To make matters worse, their powers do not work in the past, and they must find a way to defend against Nicholas, the powerful warlock with a deadly power ring.

**18. “When Bad Warlocks Go Good”** Written by Edithe Swensen; Directed by Kevin Inch; airdate: April 28, 1999; *Guest Cast:* Shawn Christian (Josh); Nick Kokotakis (Brendan Rowe); David Kriegel (Greg Rowe); Frank Birney, Michael Weatherly, Andrea E. Taylor (Girl Victim); Stacie Chan (Little Girl); Ethan Hooper (Officer); Anne Vazeze (Nun).

A warlock named Brendan faces the wrath of his brethren when he goes to a church and renounces his evil heritage. The Halliwell witches use their powers to rescue Brendan from his warlock siblings, and learn that he is an essential component of an all-powerful warlock trio. Now the warlocks must reconvert Brendan to evil before he is ordained as a priest, or see to it that he dies. Andy becomes involved in the case after Father Austin is attacked by the warlocks in church, and he learns of Prue’s involvement.

**19. “Blind Sided”** Written by Tony Blake and Paul Jackson; Directed by Craig Zisk; airdate: May 5, 1999; *Guest Cast:* Shawn Christian (Josh); Scott Plank (Eric Loman); Raphael Sbarge (Brent Miller); Scott Terra, Matt George, Maureen Muldoon (Dee); Michael O’Connor (Jerry Cartwright); Dennis Keiffer (Grimlock #2); Lucy Rodriguez (Housekeeper).

Prue attempts to save a little boy from a bald “grimlock,” but the monster escapes with his prey into some kind of dimensional portal. Worse, a passerby, who just happens to be an investigative reporter, observes Prue’s powers and now intends to “out” her on videotape. While Prue copes with the publicity-desperate reporter, Phoebe and Piper enlist the services of a blind man to help stop the demons, who steal the eyesight of children and then use that ill-gotten vision to determine who has a “good” aura and destroy it. The reporter tells Andy about Prue’s power, spurring a confrontation between Andy and Prue.

**20. “The Power of Two”** Written by Brad Kern; Directed by Elodie Keene; airdate: May 12, 1999; *Guest Cast:* Jeff Kober (Jackson Ward, “The Ghost of Alcatraz”); Brenda Bakke (Soultaker); Cristine Rose (Clair); Carlos Gomez, Sean Hennigan, Susan Chuang (Monique); Don Brunner (Inspector Anderson); Lesley Woods (Iris Beiderman); Jack Donner (Judge Renault); Michelle Harrell (Inspector Blakely); Gregg Monk (Officer); Jim Hanna (Detective); Victoria Fang (Marianne); Yuji Hasegawa (Banker Yakuham).

Phoebe runs afoul of an astral projecting ghost on Alcatraz, and Prue is told to limit family emergencies if she wants to keep her job at the auction house. Andy conducts a murder investigation in which it appears that the killer is Phoebe’s ghost of Alcatraz, a man who died thirty-five years ago! To stop the evil spirit, it must be combated on the astral plane ... which means that one of the Halliwell girls must die!

**21. “Love Hurts”** Written by Chris Levinson, Zack Estrin, Javier Grillo-Marxuach; Directed by James Whitmore; airdate: May 19, 1999; *Guest Cast:* Brian Krause (Leo); Michael Trucco (Alec); Carlos Gomez (Rodriguez); Lisa Robin Kelly (Daisy); Don Brunner (Inspector Anderson); Tom Vi (Motel Manager).

Leo returns to San Francisco to help a witch being stalked by a warlock known as a “Dark Lighter.” Poisoned by the warlock, Leo seeks the help of the Halliwells as they prepare for a vacation. There is no cure for the Dark Lighter’s evil venom, and Leo faces death even as Prue tries to defend Daisy. Piper conducts a “power switch” spell to save Leo with his own healing powers, but she ends up jumbling Phoebe’s and Prue’s powers. Under pressure from Internal Affairs, Andy resigns from the force.

**22. “Déjà Vu All Over Again”** Written by Brad Kern and Constance M. Burge; Directed by Les Sheldon; airdate: May 26, 1999; *Guest Cast*: David Carradine (Tempus); Carlos Gomez (Rodriguez); Wendy Benson (Joanne Hertz).

Inspector Rodriguez of Internal Affairs is actually a demon sent to defeat the Charmed Ones, and now he is assisted in his efforts by a powerful demon called “Tempus” who can replay time again and again. Rodriguez sets a trap for the Halliwell sisters using Andy’s life. In the first attack, Phoebe is killed, but Tempus wants a total victory, so he reverses time and allows Rodriguez to make a second attempt. In the next go round, Piper and Phoebe are both killed, but then time resets again and it all starts over one more time ... but finally the catastrophic consequences cannot be avoided, and a beloved friend dies.

## ***Brimstone* (1998–1999)**

### **CRITICAL RECEPTION:**

“*Brimstone* is so dark and paranoid, it almost makes *Millennium* look cheerful ... shot in a weird fluorescent glow that makes everything bleach out, *Brimstone* is as pretentious as it is dreary ... the show is beyond salvation.”—Robert Bianco, *U.S.A. Today*: “Hellfire Without Heat,” October 23, 1998, page 9E.

“... dark, implausible yet surprisingly watchable hour thriller ... Horton flashes enough hangdog expressions and dispenses sufficient soulful wisdom to make viewers care about his bizarre predicament. Glover is terrific ... while helmer/director of photography Felix Enriquez Alcala lends ... an agreeably foreboding, shadowy ambiance.”—Ray Richmond, *Variety*, October 5–11, page 33.

“... *Brimstone* earns points for visual flair; Co-executive producer and director ... Alcala gets a lot out of framing Horton against rain-wet street corners. In turn, the actor responds to his surroundings by assuming the classic hard-boiled posture of clipped speech and sudden, violent actions.”—Ken Tucker, *Entertainment Weekly*: “Super Freaks,” November 13, 1998.

“... *Brimstone* launches with one of the best pilots filmed for television ... This one kicks the flames high from the beginning with a great premise that’s compellingly presented. There’s subtle acting and dark-but-witty writing, ... quick and jerky camera work that adds nervous texture, and a scratchy, nasty soundtrack. As Stone, Peter Horton is a smashing standout ... a superb anti-hero.”—Tamara L Hladik, *Sci-Fi Weekly* (Internet Review): “NYPD *Brimstone*,” October 1998.

“This show is so high concept its many concepts collide ... The show is partly *The Fugitive* and partly time travel. It’s about good and evil and *The Twilight Zone*. But always, it is dull ... any sign of life would have been an improvement.”—Caryn James, *The New York Times*, October 23, 1998, page E32.

### **FORMAT**

Tough-talking but tender-hearted Ezekial Stone (Peter Horton) is a Manhattan cop who made a bad mistake. When his beautiful wife, Rosalyn, was raped by a psycho named Gilbert Jax, he took the law into his own hands and killed the rapist. Two months later, Stone was killed in the line of duty and he went straight to Hell for his crime. That’s where he’s been for the last fifteen years, since 1983 actually. However, sometime in 1998, 113 of the most “vile” criminals in Hell manage a daring jailbreak and return to Earth. The Devil (John Glover), a wisecracking and witty fellow, recruits Detective Stone to pursue the fugitives and send them back to Hell. Stone’s reward for doing so is a second shot at human life and happiness ... redemption. Every time Stone dispatches a villain from Hell, a runic tattoo (representing a specific convict) disappears from his body.

Such is the plot of *Brimstone*, an hour-long horror drama which aired on Fox TV in late 1998 and early 1999. In addition to central characters Stone and the Devil, *Brimstone* features a large cast of supporting/recurring characters. On the side of good are Father Horne (Albert Hall), a blind priest who knows the truth about Stone, Max (Lori Petty), the smart-talking landlord in Stone’s fleabag building,

and a kindly waitress (Maria Costa) who serves Stone his favorite artery-clogging foods in an oft-seen greasy spoon diner. Seen frequently as well are Fraker (Scott Lawrence) an L.A. cop with no love for Stone, and Ezekial's lovely widow, Rosalyn (Stacy Haiduk). Representing first friendship and then danger on the series is Detective Sergeant Ashe (Teri Polo), a cop who changes loyalty as the series progresses, and eventually reveals a dark secret.

*Brimstone* is among the most visually distinctive series of the Terror TV pantheon. Jammed with slow-motion photography, disturbing jump cuts, and grainy, gritty images, the series is always a treat to watch. Although the formula is repetitive (Stone goes after a fugitive, catches the fugitive, and sends the fugitive back to Hell), *Brimstone* is nonetheless a remarkably cohesive series. Each and every episode of *Brimstone* explores the yin and yang of human existence, and meditates on the nature of evil.

Villains featured on the series include an unrepentant rapist ("Encore"), a shape-shifting multiple personality ("Faces"), a neo-Nazi ("Ashes"), a sexy love-starved convict who kills the ones she loves ("Heat"), and even a *Bonnie and Clyde* pair of Hell thugs trying to relive their doomed romance ("The Lovers").

Though Stone is a New York cop, the series is set in Los Angeles.

## HISTORY

*Brimstone* emerged from the minds of Ethan Reiff and Cyrus Voris, two horror writers who had combined forces to pen the successful *Tales from the Crypt: Demon Knight* (1995) motion picture. Ironically, *Brimstone* was originally a movie concept, but the mid-nineties proved to be a bad time for horror films at the box office (this was pre-*Scream* [1996]). However, horror was really flourishing on TV for the first time with the wildly successful *The X-Files*, and Voris and Reiff soon tailored their concept to the small screen.

An early controversy concerning *Brimstone* involved the Voris/Reiff format. Some fans/critics openly complained that the central idea of *Brimstone* cribbed too much from Todd McFarlane's *Spawn*, a popular comic/film/cartoon/toy franchise which centered around a warrior returning to Earth from Hell to combat the forces of evil. It was a moot point, however, as *Spawn* was an adolescent wish-fulfillment adventure about a cool superhero with a bad ass attitude and neat superweapons, and *Brimstone* emerged almost immediately as an adult meditation on evil's role in the heart of man.

Fox TV, which had seen good luck with *The X-Files*, decent luck with *Millennium* and *Werewolf*, and not so good luck with *Space: Above and Beyond*, *Strange Luck* and *The Visitor*, green-lighted production of the 13 episodes of *Brimstone* with *Thirtysomething* star Peter Horton playing Ezekial Stone and John Glover (*Gremlins 2: The New Batch* [1990], *Tales from the Crypt: "Undertaking Pallor"*) essaying the role of the Devil. Lori Petty (*Point Break* [1991], *Tank Girl* [1994], *Star Trek Voyager: "Gravity"*), and familiar face Stacy Haiduk (*Superboy*, *SeaQuest DSV*, *Kindred: The Embraced*, *Charmed: "Feats of Clay"*) brought additional charm and talent to the gritty series, as the two "good" women in Stone's (after) life.

*Brimstone* was originally scheduled to premiere on Tuesday, October 27, 1998, at 9:00 P.M., but was bumped from the Fox schedule and moved to an earlier time slot, October 23rd at 8:00 P.M., with almost no warning. The move was made for two reasons. First, Fox had canceled two sitcoms (*Living*

in *Captivity* and *Getting Personal*) which aired on Friday nights as a lead-in for Chris Carter's troubled second series, *Millennium*. Secondly, Fox had seen good ratings emerge from several episodes of the "reality based" series *Guinness World Records: Prime Time* on Tuesday nights, and did not wish to bump it from a successful time slot.<sup>1</sup> The upshot of this arrangement was that many people who were eagerly awaiting the premiere of *Brimstone* simply could not find it. The move came at such a late date that commercials had already aired heralding the premiere of the show on the 27th. This last minute shift to an earlier time (the Friday before the scheduled first Tuesday) resulted in lower-than-expected ratings for *Brimstone* right out of the gate. Generally well-reviewed, however, *Brimstone* delighted critics (who found it) because, like *The X-Files*, it successfully incorporated humor into its horrific format. Creators Reiff and Voris, along with series producers, referred to their new show as *Touched by a Devil*, and the writers successfully utilized humor to break the tension. As Reiff and Voris described it:

There are a lot of little one-liners and little things Peter did so well (in the pilot), and we're going to keep pushing that.<sup>2</sup>

Despite the humor, the visual flair, stylish action sequences, excellent performances by Horton and Glover, and a compelling unity of mood and content unusual in so young a series, *Brimstone* did not succeed in the ratings game on Friday night even though it aired before the similarly horrific *Millennium*. Generally, the Reiff/Voris series captured 4.0–4.3 million viewers per week (the same audience numbers, essentially, for *Charmed* on the WB or *Star Trek: Voyager* on UPN), but that tally was not nearly enough for Fox to grant a renewal. In spite of several excellent episodes, *Brimstone* was canceled after the initial guarantee of thirteen episodes. By February 12, 1999, all 13 shows had been aired, and Fox was already exploring other ratings gambits (such as a rerun of "Triangle," the Bermuda Triangle episode of *The X-Files*, and the broadcast network premiere of the 1995 feature film, *Seven*).

Although Fox could point to the ratings failure of the series to validate the cancellation of *Brimstone*, it was (and is) still quite difficult to understand the network's lack of commitment. What series could have proven to be a better lead-in for *Millennium*? Two sitcoms had already failed there, so it is highly unlikely that two *different* sitcoms would do the trick. If Fox had just been patient (as they had been with *The X-Files* and *Millennium*), the powers-that-be may have realized that they had in *Brimstone* the perfect successor to the rapidly aging (six years and counting) *X-Files*.

Compelling stories, good acting, fine guest stars including Alex Datcher (*John Carpenter's Body Bags* [1993]), Lindsay Crouse (*Iceman* [1985]), Louise Fletcher (*Invaders from Mars* [1986], *Star Trek: Deep Space Nine* [1993–1999]), William McNamara (*Copycat* [1995]), Michelle Forbes (*Kalifornia* [1993], *Star Trek: The Next Generation*), and veteran Jeff Corey, as well as oodles of visual flourishes all assure *Brimstone's* position as one of the ten best modern terror TV offerings, even if the network which aired it did not give a damn about it.

*Brimstone* is currently the hub of a very large fan base, a group of dedicated aficionados who are working to bring the series back into production.

## CRITICAL COMMENTARY

The episodic nature of television often precludes a true feeling of consistency in dramatic, and especially horror, series. The anthologies, by definition, resist consistency and unity: each week a new

story, new characters, new performers, and often new directors and writers are featured. But even programs with continuing characters sometimes find it difficult to be consistent because of the need to throw something new and different out to the fickle masses. Consider *Millennium*, a series which aired for three years. It has also had three different formats, because some audiences apparently felt that something was missing, or needed to be tweaked.

On the other hand, a dramatic series can also falter because it is simply too consistent (and repetitive), so as to actually become boring. *Brimstone* is that unique television (and genre) jewel, a series which brilliantly mixes style, cinematic technique, strong stories and fine acting to create a large and meaningful single tapestry, in this case once concerning “the nature of evil” and man’s relationship to that “nature.”

At first blush, *Brimstone* feels like a perfect candidate for the aforementioned boredom/repetition factor. Like the lackluster mid-80s series *Friday the 13th: The Series* (in which antiques were slavishly and boringly recovered week in and week out for some 70 episodes), *Brimstone* threatened tedium by appearing single-minded. After all, everybody knew that each week there would be a fugitive from Hell with incredible superpowers (a woman who burns up those she makes love to in “Heat”; a woman who kills lovers with a fatal kiss in “Carrier”; a man who shoots electricity from his hands in “Executioner”; an evil Carthaginian warrior who can move like the wind in “Slayer”) who would wreak terror for nearly an hour, until Stone banishes them to Hell (by destroying the windows to their souls: the eyes). Thirteen weeks of such a rigid, unvarying formula could represent a kind of Hell all its own. But *Brimstone* grew nicely from week-to-week, until the hellish antagonist of the week was almost unimportant, except in how he or she affected Stone on a personal, introspective level. And how did this gallery of villains affect the hero? In very interesting ways, actually.

The Devil held up each of these nefarious criminals to Stone as a kind of twisted reflection of the detective, himself. The villain in “Heat,” for instance, was a beautiful young girl named Gwendolyn who had lived during the Middle Ages. One day, she was raped by a gang of wealthy would-be knights. Her crime? She killed them all in an act of bloody vengeance. In other words, Gwendolyn was guilty (essentially) of the same crime which Stone had committed (and had been damned to Hell for). Stone saw the parallel, and realized that he did not want to kill this particular fugitive. He identified with her, understood her pain, and her villainy evolved from the realm of the comic book to one of human tragedy.

The same is true of “Repentance,” a story in which a Nazi war criminal returns to Earth and, amazingly, decides to do good. He performs good works, and attempts to atone for the conspicuous evils of his previous existence. Although Stone must still dispatch this character to the underworld, the question is successfully raised: is eternal suffering an appropriate punishment for someone with a finite life span, for someone who still has the seeds of goodness within him? Does a second chance make a difference, or is damnation really and truly for “all eternity” with no second chances, no opportunities for reflection, or a change in judgment? The “draconian” nature of Christian theology is thus questioned.

Commendably, Stone is able to review the ups and downs of his own life in a *Brimstone* story entitled “It’s a Helluva Life.” In this, perhaps the finest episode of the *Brimstone* roster, Stone is given a tour of his life by both the Devil and a lookalike angel (John Glover). The audience sees Stone as a child, his oft-mentioned abusive father, and even his life as a rule stretching, hell-bent police officer. Again, the nature of good and evil is explored in a significant and interesting way. One man who Stone sent to



jail (by manufacturing evidence against him!) was subsequently murdered in prison. So, was Stone responsible for that death? Or, was he to be rewarded because by planting false evidence he actually saved a family of vacationers who would have crossed paths with the drug-addicted perp had he still been free? *Brimstone* works so well because it examines critically what “evil” in human nature is really about. Can it ever be mitigated by extenuating circumstances (like environment and upbringing), or is evil simply a deed which once done cannot be undone? On this “walking tour” of Stone’s sins, the Devil tells Ezekial that it is “the thought that counts,” the thought of evil which poisons a soul. Yet no less a source than an angel suggests otherwise. This minion of Heaven reveals (conversely) that even Universal law is open to mitigating circumstances. So, what the narrative of *Brimstone* has accomplished in its brief run is rather impressive. It is a show that exists in the universe of absolutes and black and whites (Good and Evil; Heaven and Hell); yet it is obsessed with moral relativism, the notion that evil is *caused* sometimes through ignorance, passion, or other human foibles. Some people might say that Stone is “evil” for planting evidence and breaking the law (and, indeed, that is how the universe has finally judged him), but at the same time, that very same evil has generated a great good (the survival of other innocents). “It’s a Helluva Life” examines this contradiction in some beautiful ways, and it was not the only episode to do so.

The moral relativism of *Brimstone* has been incorporated throughout the series in beautiful and rather poetic ways. In “Executioner” Stone is again judged “evil,” because, like the villain of the week, he once put himself above the law (in murdering Gilbert Jax) and had become judge, jury and executioner. Art can do two things for a viewer: it can compare (show similarities) or contrast (expose differences). “Executioner” landed two characters in mortal conflict, but compared the contestants and found that they were like-minded. Those who watch it attentively will understand the message, even though it is not enunciated in typical TV fashion (with flashbacks or heavy-handed dialogue).

“Faces” asks the age-old question: can children be evil? It then refers to the topical subject of the juvenile killing sprees in Jonesboro and elsewhere. The same episode also gives Stone the chance to be a father for a short while, an experience which he missed because of his interrupted life. “Mourning After” takes another tact all together, asking Stone to contemplate whether his love of wife Rosalyn is selfish since it keeps putting her in harm’s way. The longer *Brimstone* lasted, the more obvious it became that the show was not about super-powered criminals from Hell, but the soul of one tortured man. The criminals were but looking glasses through which Stone could view himself.

*Brimstone* is well-written not just because of its debates on morality, but because the writers permit the show to develop in a believable and fun manner. One continuing storyline saw Stone as a kind of befuddled fish-out-of-water as he attempted to cope with fifteen years of technological and societal changes on Earth. He learned about \*69 in “Heat,” the Internet and websites in “Repentance,” screen savers in “Executioner,” computer files in “Ashes,” Rollerblades in “The Lovers” and fax machines in “Faces.” He longed for Reggie Bars in “Repentance,” and so forth. This subplot granted *Brimstone* permission to veer effortlessly into humorous terrain without seeming hokey. The writers were also exceptionally gifted at defining concepts which are sometimes difficult to pin down in concrete terms.

For instance, Hell is tantalizingly described (in “Heat”) as a place where “everything you want is just out of reach ... you’re stuck in mud.” That account of the realm is more effective than the sight of bright licking flames and pools of fire because it immediately establishes the emotional impact of damnation. Stone himself provides a touching definition of love in “Mourning After,” commenting that it is “binding, euphoric ... but torture. It’s painful, but you don’t want it to stop.” Again, Stone’s

description manages to explain his feelings for his wife in a manner that a flashback to a “happy” time for the couple might not have managed so eloquently. *Brimstone* is one series which remembers that what is intimated, what is merely suggested, can be far scarier or more powerful than what is actually depicted on screen. *Brimstone* never actually went to Hell, but the Devil, Stone, and the parade of fugitives all provide eyewitness testimony about its horrors, accounts which are ever more convincing than any matte-painting or optical effect could prove to be.

Modern TV has all but forgotten that camera angles are supposed to mean something, that how the audience sees an image is as important as the subject of the image itself. *The X-Files* and *Space: 1999* are two examples of TV programming which use the language of film to evoke terror and generate feelings of heightened suspense and involvement in viewers. Thankfully, *Brimstone* is another latter day example. The entire series uses images in an eerily effective way. Firstly, every episode is lensed in a kind of faded, icy blue hue. Blue is traditionally the color (or pallor) of death, and the world of *Brimstone* is very much a dead one to Stone. He is (technically) dead, his connection to his past life is dead for all intents and purposes, and though his emotions are alive, he has little connection with the world. The grainy, gritty visuals and the overall ashen look of the series reinforce this feeling of remoteness. The pervasive jump cuts (seen in all episodes) keep a viewer on edge in an avant-garde kind of way, and one leaves a typical viewing of this show with a nasty case of the jitters. Murderous actions are forecasted, unexpectedly repeated, and time flashes backward and forward in herky-jerky style. It is *film noir* for TV, and for once the visuals actually reflect content.

The episode “Carrier” opens with an extended slow-motion dance sequence. Sally Ann McGee, a Prohibition era lass who died after spending years isolated from humanity because she was a carrier of typhoid, dances expressively on the floor of a 1990s night club called *Writhe*. The slow motion technique reveals to the audience how much Sally revels in her new physicality (having recently returned from Hell), as well as how dearly this woman adores the spotlight and the attention of others ... a facet of humanity which her quarantine in an earlier life denied her. At the same time, the slow motion alerts viewers to the fact that this particular girl is not quite right. Her moves are different, slightly out-of-synch, because they come from another era: the roaring '20s. As this is the opening sequence of the episode, all of this data is conveyed visually in a *tour de force* of editing and filmic style.

“Carrier” is not alone in exploiting visuals to sell a storyline. In “Mourning After,” Stone’s memories are seen in stark black and white (like flashbacks on any number of shows, from *Poltergeist: The Legacy* to *Prey*) but the little glass snow globes which Rosalyn collects are seen in contrast, in bold color. In other words, the globes are an emotional connection to a colorful past, and are alive to Stone in a way that his memories can never be. The creators and cinematographers of *Brimstone* thus manage what few others have seen fit to do of late: they reinforce their episodes with a powerful (and unifying) visual conceit. Icy blues, jagged jump cuts, slow motion, black and white versus color photography ... all these things can mean something when deployed for a purpose, and *Brimstone* remembers that.

Beyond the thematic and visual delights, *Brimstone* is successful because it manages to create “real” people. Peter Horton gives a gruff-voiced, understated performance throughout. His soulful eyes express volumes about his character’s inner life, and when he is finally pushed to anger Stone becomes unpredictable, explosive and dangerous. A rumpled detective, a man with an edge, a soul looking for redemption, and a fish out-of-water trying to understand his world and time—Stone is all

of these things and Horton hits every note with incredible precision. His Ezekial Stone ranks with David Duchovny's Mulder, Darren McGavin's Kolchak, Lance Henriksen's Frank Black and Sarah Michelle Gellar's Buffy as one of the greatest and most memorable of horror heroes.

John Glover is equally delightful as the Devil, and shows some real chemistry with Horton. Playful, deceitful, bitter and even mischievous, Glover makes the Devil an unforgettable individual. Whether cracking wise ("I say stop and smell the blood of sinners"), reflecting on the vicissitudes of Mother Nature ("Carrier") or hiding an embarrassing character flaw like love ("Ashes"), Glover is consistently charismatic as this most evil of evil characters. Together, the two lead performers of *Brimstone* challenge each other, and the resulting acting fireworks and verbal fencing enliven every story. Like Villa and Avon on *Blake's 7*, Spock and Bones on *Star Trek*, and even Mulder and Scully on *The X-Files*, Stone and the Devil on *Brimstone* share a dynamic love/hate relationship and opposite points of view which make their relationship ever fascinating and ever stimulating. Wit, irony, and delight are on display whenever Glover and Horton share a scene.

Perhaps *Brimstone* is a great series because, in the end, it is really just a tragic love story. As *Titanic* (1997) proved so dramatically, doomed love is pretty hard for human beings to resist. Along with the debate on evil and the stylistic flourishes, *Brimstone* is about one man's love for his wife. Even the torments of Hell cannot prevent Ezekial Stone from loving Rosalyn, and that fact (or flaw, as the Devil might say) makes the series seem very human. As the series inched towards cancellation, it was also moving directly toward an epiphany about Stone and his wife.

Rosalyn was a featured player in the last two stories ("It's a Helluva Life" and "Mourning After") and it seemed that she was becoming ever more aware of her husband's (sometimes distant) presence. This proved interesting, because early in the series Stone was obsessed with finding her ("Heat," "Encore"), but that obsession dwindled when he saw that his actions were putting his wife in danger. Oppositely, Rosalyn had no knowledge that Stone was alive in the early shows, but indications were that she was clued in to that strange fact by the climax of the last episode. So Stone and Rosalyn were really star-crossed lovers, never at the same point at the same time, never quite making contact with one another again. It was sad, and it was impossible to resist.

*Brimstone* had everything going for it except strong ratings. It is a quality program which excels in every avenue of production from acting and visualization to writing. If it had any weakness at all, it was that Ezekial Stone was sometimes unforgivably slow on the draw. In several episodes, he hesitated when he should have just blown away the bad guy ... and his moment of indecision resulted in another half-hour of carnage as the bad guy escaped and killed mortals. Still, this was a very minor flaw in an excellent series, and one can even argue that Stone's hesitation was dramatically motivated. Unlike some TV cops or heroes, Stone was an angst-ridden guy who had to consider the weight of destiny and the afterlife every time he pulled the trigger and killed somebody. If only Fox TV had been so considerate when determining whether or not to blast *Brimstone* from its prime time schedule.

## CAST AND CREDITS

*Cast:* Peter Horton (Detective Ezekial Stone).

*Credits:* Created by: Ethan Reiff, Cyrus Voris. *Brimstone Theme:* Peter Gabriel. *Producers:* Peter Horton, Phil Parslow. *Co-Executive Producers:* Felix Enriquez Alcala, Ethan Reiff, Cyrus Voris. *Music (various episodes):* Mark Morgan, David Schwartz. *Editors (various episodes):* Victor Dubois,

Kevin Krasny. *Director of Photography (various episodes)*: Felix Enriquez Alcala, Herbert Davis. *Associate Producer*: Steve Turner. *Executive Story Editor*: Scott A. Williams. *Story Editors*: Angel Dean Lopez, Janis Diamond, Fred Golan. *Production Design*: Jonathan Carlson. *Unit Production Manager*: Jeffrey M. Zeitlin. *First Assistant Director*: Richard Peter Schroer. *Second Assistant Director*: Bob Kozicki. *Executive in Charge of Casting*: Barbara Miller. *Casting*: Penny Perry. *Costume Designer*: Tom McKinley. *Set Decorator*: Kristin Peterson. *Property Master*: Tom Cahill. *Costume Supervisor*: Wingate Jones. *Key Makeup Artist*: Barbie Palmer. *Key Hairstylist*: Susan Kelber. *Sound Mixer*: Bill Fiege. *Re-recording Mixer*: Dan Hiland, Gary D. Rogers. *Music Editor*: David Bondelevitch. *Supervising Sound Editor*: Jain Sekuller. *Production Coordinator*: Lisa Martley. *Film and Electronic Labor*: LaserPacific. *Special Visual Effects*: Stargate Films, Inc.

## EPISODE GUIDE

**1. “Pilot”** Written by Ethan Reiff and Cyrus Voris; Directed by Felix Enriquez Alcala; airdate: October 23, 1998; *Guest Cast*: Peter Woodward (Father Salinas); Albert Hall (Father Horne); Michael Harney (William Kane); Currie Graham, Gene Mack (Tibbetts); Maria Ricossa (The Curator); Jack Duffy (Dollinger); Brian Miranda (Christopher); Kristen Booth (Teacher); Lindsey Connell (Desk Clerk); Peter Windrem (Jax); Jean Daigle (Tourist); Genevieve Langlois (Rosalyn); Adrian Griffin (Sketch Artist); Austin Di Iulio, Brandon Bone, Jesse Cairns (Altar Boys).

New York Detective Ezekial Stone murdered his wife’s rapist in 1983, and then was killed on the job himself, two months later. Since then, Stone has been languishing in eternal torment in Hell. When 113 criminals escape from Hell, the Devil recruits Stone to bring them back to his tender embrace ... in return for a second shot at life on Earth. Stone’s first case involves a 19th century priest who is killing altar boys as part of a bizarre ritual. Stone teams with a New York cop to return the criminal to eternal torment at the same time that he determines to discover the fate of his wife, Rosalyn.

**2. “Heat”** Written by Janis Diamond; Directed by Jesus Trevino; airdate: October 30, 1998; *Guest Cast*: John Glover (The Devil); Teri Polo (Detective Ashe); Holly Fields (Gwendolyn DuBar); Chad Morgan, Tim Dekay, Eric Saiset, Lindsey Crouse, Matt Reid (Todd); Larry Williams (Lawyer); Alex Sol (Nice Guy); Miguel Perez (Officer); J.F. Pryor (Carl); Karine Logue (Eileen); Carmen Mormino (Lean Cop).

Stone is hot on the trail of another Hell escapee, this time a beautiful young woman who burns her chosen lovers by touch. Her latest victim is a professor of medieval studies at a nearby University who started an affair with her but got too close. The woman, Gwendolyn DuBar, is actually a bitter serf who grew up in the unjust Middle Ages: three squires burned her home and raped her, so she killed them and ended up in Hell for her crime. Now Gwendolyn is free and Zeke must send her back ... but it is not a task he cherishes since he too is guilty of murdering a rapist.

**3. “Encore”** Written by Scott A. Williams; Directed by Felix Enriquez Alcala; airdate: November 6, 1998; *Guest Cast*: John Glover (The Devil); Stacy Haiduk (Rosalyn Stone); Albert Hall (Father Horne); William McNamara (Gilbert Jax); Louise Fletcher (Mrs. Jax); Kristin Minter (Janice Nowack); Michael Raynor, Alex Datcher (Laura Miller); John Cassini, Bruce Nozicki, Elizabeth Barris (Viv); Eileen Weisinger (Marie Tepekian); Joleen Lutz (Woman); Stephen Walsh (Groundskeeper); Lori New (Waitress); Kate McIntyre (Neighbor); A.J. Marton (Boy); Joseph Della Sorte (Gardener).

Stone is forced to remember the unhappy past when he finds himself hunting the Hell escapee who raped his wife, Rosalyn. The diabolical Gilbert Jax has returned to Earth to rape more women, and his overjoyed mother is harboring him because she believes he has returned from Heaven. Stone is soon on the trail of the rapist, but is overcome with anger when he realizes who he is tracking this time. Stone soon discovers that to kill Jax he must do more than shoot out his eyes.

**4. “Repentance”** Written by Fred Golan; Directed by Terence O’Hara; airdate: November 13, 1998; *Guest Cast:* John Glover (The Devil); Albert Hall (Father Horne); Lori Petty (Max); Norbert Weisser (Martin Benedict); David Proval (Harry); Geoffrey Blake (Toby Cole); Maria Costa (Waitress); Curtis Armstrong (Jimmy G.); Adina Porter (Rachel); Scott Lawrence (Fraker); Harris Shore (Tailor); Bart Braverman (Man); Amy Reece (Aide); Tracy Walter (Knapsack); David Stifel (Bandana).

A homeless person traversing a bridge at night sees a man kill another man by removing his eyes. At the Devil’s behest, Stone investigates the crime and discovers, to his surprise, a brass pin from a Dutch SS Nazi uniform. He soon learns that it belongs to a folk hero whom homeless folks in the area are referring to as the “Angel of Mercy,” but who is actually a Nazi criminal escaped from Hell and making restitution for his sins. Stone grapples with his own conscience as he determines if this sinner turned saint is committing murder, or if there is another culprit out there.

**5. “Poem”** Written by Ethan Reiff and Cyrus Voris; Directed by Felix Enriquez Alcalá; airdate: November 20, 1998; *Guest Cast:* Teri Polo (Detective Ashe); Roger Yuan (Mr. Po); Rosalind Chao (Ms. Chow); Ntare Mwine; Will Yun Lee (Roger); Kiva Dawson (Girl at Club); Diana Campaneau (Romanian Girl); Robert Gallo (Desk Sergeant); Beulah Quo (Landlady); John Lepard (Assistant D.A.); Randall Rapstein (Assistant Coroner); June Zujimoto (Waitress); Mike Sun (Charles); Charles Shen (Wing); Nikolai Stoilov (Romanian Guy); Stephanie Han (Wei Yei Bring); Albert Wong (Chinese Homeless Man); Melissa Chan (Teaching Assistant).

Another Hell escapee, this time a Chinese man who died a thousand years ago, is on the loose in Los Angeles. Po once committed a horrible crime against a member of a royal family, and now he is murdering innocent women as part of an epic poem to atone for his long ago deed. Stone butts heads again with Detective Ashe at the same time he seeks the assistance of a pretty teacher in sending this villain back to the nether region.

**6. “Executioner”** Written by Scott A. Williams; Story by Fred Golan; Directed by Dan Lerner; airdate: December 4, 1998; *Guest Cast:* John Glover (The Devil); Teri Polo (Detective Ashe); Lori Petty (Max); Michelle Forbes (Julia Trent); Robert Knepper (Stuart Lambert); John Hawkes (Frederick Wilcott Graver); Maria Costa (Waitress); Scott Lawrence (Fraker); Tim DeZarn, Jeff Corey, Frank Ozzolino, Laura Lee Botsacos, Dino Menninger, Bob Bonds, Gary Anthony Williams.

When the Devil pops up on a public access TV show and sits in on a panel with a man from the Southland Metaphysical Foundation who believes that people are spontaneously combusting, Stone takes on a new and bizarre case. The last victim of a “freak electrical accident” as the authorities are calling it, was an attorney named Errol Lichter. Stone follows the trail to a beautiful D.A. named Julia Trent, and learns that there have been five murders in four months ... all associated with electricity. Using the Internet with Max, Stone tracks the perp down and discovers he is a Hell escapee who takes a special glee in putting folks in the electric chair.

**7. “Slayer”** Written by Angel Dean Lopez; Story by Ethan Ruff and Cyrus Voris; Directed by Vern

Gillum; airdate: December 11, 1998; *Guest Cast*: John Glover (The Devil); Teri Polo (Detective Ashe); Albert Hall (Father Horne); Lori Petty (Max); Maria Costa (Waitress); Richard Brooks, Lisa Akey, Danielle Nicolet, Aaron Lustig, Ntare Mwine, Diane Robin, Joey Dente (Bartender); Michael Li (Uniform Cop); Eddie Watkins (Uniform Officer); Saida Pagan (Field Reporter).

A fierce warrior, Hazrable Scarus, returns to Earth and challenges Stone, whom he realizes is duty-bound to dispatch him back to Hell. The soldier knows that Stone will protect the innocent, but he fought in the Punic Wars for Carthage and delights in the murder of bystanders. Now the warrior from the past and the cop from the present must lock horns over a would-be alliance. Scarus wants to team up with Stone and rule the world, and he is killing innocent victims, the widows of slain police officers, to get what he wants.

**8. “Ashes”** Written by Angel Dean Lopez; Directed by Larry Carroll; airdate: December 18, 1998; *Guest Cast*: John Glover (The Devil); Teri Polo (Detective Ashe); Scott Lawrence (Fraker); Michael Bowen, Wayne Pere, Mark Pelligrino, Carlos La Camara, Nameer El Kadi (Al Samaysir); E.E. Bell (Mailman); Breck Charles White (Cop); Hershel Fox (Praying Man).

After the Devil shows up in his bed and admonishes him to go to church, Detective Stone looks into a series of church fires in L.A. Stone meets with a rabbi who has been monitoring the destruction of mosques, churches and synagogues, and he has found 4,000 year old Canaanite knives at each crime scene. Stone and Detective Ashe track the knives to a neo-Nazi and then an arsonist named Lee Varner. Ashe and Stone become emotionally involved as they work together to stop the arsonist ... but Ashe is not who she seems to be.

**9. “The Lovers”** Written by Chris Bertolet; Directed by John Kretchmer; airdate: January 8, 1999; *Guest Cast*: John Glover (The Devil); Jesse Borrego (Paco Gomez); Shannon Sturges (Jocelyn Paige); Lori Petty (Max); Scott Lawrence (Fraker); Maria Costa (Waitress); Castulo Guerra, Kevin Cooney, Mel Winkler, Laurence Lau, Betty Carvalho, Brian Senter, Harry S. Murphy.

Stone needs a set of wheels, so after a brief flirtation with Rollerblading, he purchases a car from the Devil for \$36.22—all the money he has left in the world. The car comes in handy in tracking down a couple of Hell escapees, Paco and Jocelyn, both of whom died thirty years ago. Now they’re reliving their glory days, trying to steal her aunt Ruth’s money, and burning up the hearts of those who stand in their way. Stone first sends Paco back to Hell (with the help of a pointed hood ornament) and then turns his attention to the spoiled Jocelyn.

**10. “Carrier”** Written by Janis Diamond; Directed by Jesus Salvador Trevino; airdate: January 15, 1999; *Guest Cast*: John Glover (The Devil); Lori Petty (Max); Alexandra Powers (Sally Ann McGee); Lauren Sinclair (Dr. Maria Geyser); Maria Costa (Waitress); Dax Griffin, Kari Wiedergott, Steven Culp, Christian Bocher, David Correi, Craig Allen Wolf, Ray Proscia (Manager); Miriam Parrish (Christine); Jerry Hauck (Blue Collar Bartender); Devin Kamin (Drunken Party Guest).

A beautiful flapper, escaped from Hell, kills those she kisses because of an internal disease she has been incubating in the burning nether region for more than 75 years. Stone and a biological containment team led by Dr. Maria Geyser try to solve a murder at Writhe, the night club where the flapper struck. Then, the flapper, a salmonella typhoid carrier, manages to cause a disease outbreak at a party. Stone tracks down Sally Ann McGee, the killer, but she pulls a fast one on him and plants a big wet, juicy ... disease-ridden ... kiss on his eyes ...

**11. “Faces”** Written by Fred Golan; Directed by Larry Carroll; airdate: January 29, 1999; *Guest Cast:* John Glover (The Devil); Lori Petty (Max); Stefan Gierasch (Charles Reid); Jerry Hardin (Judge Thurston Bristol); Billy O’Sullivan, Greg Ellis, Joanna Canton, Timilee Romolini, Heidi Kling, Taffy Wallace, Billy Sly Williams, Michael C. Mahon (Carl); Octavia L. Spencer (Duty Nurse); Barbara K. Whinnery (Katherine); John Apicella (Donny); Rawnie Leigh (Granddaughter).

The Devil directs Stone to 153 Green Street, a suburban street address, where a husband has just been murdered by an apparently schizophrenic escapee from Hell. Stone befriends one of the multiple personalities, a helpless teenage boy named Brian, and questions him about his “friends,” the violent Vic and the protective Tammy. Stone soon learns that the boy was the subject of a book called *Beaten Down* (written in 1957) and that he went to Hell for murder ... but now he’s returned to finish off his abusive stepdad.

**12. “It’s a Helluva Life”** Written by Janis Diamond and Scott A. Williams; Directed by Felix Enriquez Alcala; airdate: February 5, 1999; *Guest Cast:* John Glover (The Devil/Angel); Stacy Haiduk (Rosalynd Stone); Ralph Seymour, Steven Durham, Jane Leigh Connelly, Vincent Berry, John Casini, Kevin Frye, Marisa Parker, Cody McMains, Rick Ike Jones (Bank Guard); Brett Walkow (Marvin); Alberto Vasquez (Carlin); Saida Pagan (Reporter).

Stone unexpectedly spots his wife, Rosalyn, during his pursuit of a bank-robbing Hell escapee, and then debates with the Devil about the course of his life. The Devil says that Stone was always a bad and unredeemable man, and then takes the detective on a tour of his life. Zeke and the Devil have ringside seats to review his short life: the neglect of his wife, the broken rules, the hurt inflicted on an innocent child during his own childhood, and so forth. Later, Stone is visited by an angel who looks just like the devil and tells him that there is an upside to his life.

**13. “Mourning After”** Written by Ethan Reiff and Cyrus Voris; From a story by Angel Dean Lopez; Directed by Dan Lerner; airdate: February 12, 1999; *Guest Cast:* John Glover (The Devil); Teri Polo (Ashe); Lori Petty (Max); Stacy Haiduk (Rosalynd Stone); Mark Valley (Barry Sinisa); Staci Greason, Esther Scott, Brooke Davis, Kay E. Kuter.

On Valentine’s Day, a lonely Stone reminisces about his life with his wife, Rosalyn. He follows her home one night, unable to resist the temptation to be close to her, only to discover that there is another man in her life: a real estate agent named Barry. Stone drowns his sorrows at a bar with Max, who is also depressed about love, and then investigates a series of snake attacks near Rosalyn’s house in Highland Park. As Stone gets closer to Rosalyn, he is confronted with a surprise: Barry is actually a shape-shifting and vengeful Ashe.

## *Strange World* (1999)

### CRITICAL RECEPTION

“Like a fourth-generation copy of a clever concept, this grim *X-Files* wannabe has the basic elements, but it’s all a little garbled and hard to decipher. Tim Guinee stars as ... Paul Turner, a combat veteran battling the lethal effects of Gulf War Syndrome. He’s kept alive by a series of vaccinations provided by a mysterious woman who warns him not to investigate too closely the origins of his illness ... Sound familiar? It should. Creator and executive producer Howard Gordon worked for four years on *The X-Files*.”—*E Online Review*, “The Midseason Lineup,” March 1999.

“The disturbingly derivative *Strange World* illustrates what *The X-Files* might have played like had it revolved around Gulf War Syndrome rather than the supernatural ... which isn’t necessarily a solid foundation on which to build an action series ... It’s hard to envision where *Strange World* will travel from here as it weaves a scenario in which it’s left to one scientist with a battle-related illness to save mankind from itself ... Tech credits are fine, save for lighting that appears to have suffered from budget cutbacks.”—Ray Richmond, *Variety*, March 9, 1999.

“Another *X-Files* clone ... Our advice? Skip your meds, doc, and get out of this dreary world.”—Marc Bernardin, *Entertainment Weekly*, March 12, 1999.

### FORMAT

*Strange World* is the chronicle of Dr. Paul Turner (Tim Guinee), an M.D. exposed to a deadly toxin during the Gulf War. In 1991, he returned home to the United States to die, only to discover that he was being kept alive by a mysterious antidote, administered by a secret conspiracy. For eight years, he did not know who was supplying him with the medicine to keep his acute aplastic anemia in remission, but in early 1999 Turner discovered the answer. A mysterious Japanese Woman (Vivian Wu) and a large pharmaceutical company had invested a great deal of money in him and his “cure,” and were now bent on using him as a secret agent for their own, enigmatic agenda. At the same time, Turner’s commanding officer from the army, Major Lynne Reese (Saundra Quartermain) recruits Turner to work for US ARMIID (United States Army Medical Institute for Infectious Diseases) to investigate the criminal abuses of science in the United States, permitted by Charter 44.

Turner is helped in his quest to learn more about his disease and his benefactors by his lover and former physician, a Yale educated M.D., Sydney MacMillan (Kristin Lehman).

*Strange World* is an hour-long action-adventure horror series from the talented Howard Gordon, longtime writer and producer for *The X-Files*. The series premiered in the early months of 1999. It was only broadcast three times before being canceled by its host network, ABC.

### HISTORY

*Strange World* came out of nowhere and vanished to nowhere in a blink of an eye. Early in 1999, the ABC network began to publicize the imminent airing of what it called an “exclusive limited series,” a



title which in retrospect was an indicator that the network was not committed to either the series' success or its longevity. Created by Howard Gordon with Tim Kring, the TV series concerned one man's pursuit of the truth, and his continuing mission to expose "crimes of science" in turn-of-the-21st-century technological America. Like *The X-Files*, *Strange World* is steeped in paranoia and conspiracies, and like *The Burning Zone*, it has a strong biological/medical slant to its stories. Tim Guinee (*John Carpenter's Vampires* [1998], *Blade* [1998]) essayed the lead role of the "true believer," Paul Turner, and he did an excellent job of playing a hyperintense, hyperintelligent young man who has become a puppet for the "forces that be" thanks to a deadly disease and a mysterious cure. Despite his fine turn as Turner, most critics saw Guinee's character as a Fox Mulder knock-off, a comparison made worse by the fact that Guinee is physically appealing in much the same manner as David Duchovny ... kind of an athletic/intellectual hunk. Also lending some confusion to this 1999 affair is the fact that its early guest stars all seem to be culled directly from recent *X-Files* and *Millennium* episodes, with Sarah-Jane Redmond ("Schizogeny," "Lamentation," "A Room with No View," "Antipas"), John Finn ("Redux," "Redux II," "Covenant") and William MacDonald ("Through a Glass Darkly") making prominent appearances. Because ABC so prominently advertised the behind-the-scenes connection to *The X-Files*, some viewers of *Strange World* were left confused ... wondering if these familiar performers were supposed to be essaying the same roles as they had on the twin Chris Carter series.

*Strange World* began its abbreviated prime time run on Monday, March 8, 1999, at 10:00 P.M. It then moved to its regular time slot on Tuesday nights at 10:00 (briefly filling in for the hit cop show *NYPD Blue*). The show was only broadcast twice in its Tuesday slot before being eliminated by ABC. The network had originally planned to run five of the thirteen episodes it had ordered in that sortie, but the March 23 episode ("Spirit Falls") and the March 30 episode ("Skin") were replaced by *NYPD Blue* and the series was canceled. Ironically, the last episode of *Strange World* broadcast on ABC ("Azrael's Breed") had featured a trailer for "Spirit Falls," an episode that was destined never to be shown! Loyal viewers (all five of them!) tuned in the following week only to be surprised that *Strange World* had vanished as quickly as it had come.

There was some talk of *Strange World* returning in either the fall of 1999 or as a midseason replacement in 2000, but those proved to be unfounded rumors and *Strange World* seems to be a "dead" property at this time, especially with producer Howard Gordon working on the *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* spin-off, *Angel*.

A horror show based in science and medicine, *Strange World* is another example of a series that was never given time to breathe or develop adequately. All the episodes aired showed considerable promise (certainly more promise than a whole season of *Charmed*). This could have been an excellent TV series if ABC (the network which had also trashed the promising *Prey*) had shown the same faith in it they had lavished on the once-low rated drama *The Practice*. *Strange World* qualifies as horror because even in its short run, it focuses on the terrifying side effects of unwarranted and unapproved scientific experiments. In the pilot, a boy is kidnapped and his parents discover that he is a clone ... a fact made more hideous by the appearance of a bad Xerox copy of the boy (suffering the effects of replicative fading). In "Lullaby," babies are ripped from their mother's wombs, and the expectant women find, to their horror, that there were no babies there at all. Instead, their stomachs were simply a planting ground for organs to be harvested by a shadowy conspiracy! And, in "Azrael's Breed," a lunatic neurologist explores the boundaries of death by injecting brain cells from dead people into the minds of the living. These "death memories" become like a narcotic high for those who experience

them, but they also are highly addictive. These are horror stories in the vein of Mary Shelley's novel *Frankenstein*: they raise questions about science, its applications, and its misuse, in a frightening and thought-provoking manner.

As odd as *Strange World* was, it could never survive in a much stranger world: the universe of TV ratings. As someone who watched it pass in the blink of an eye, this critic will miss its intelligence and its intensity. This one could have been a contender.

### CRITICAL COMMENTARY

Even though it aired less than a third of all its episodes before facing the razor-sharp axe of hiatus, *Strange World* promptly delivered on its format promise to investigate "the criminal abuses of science." The pilot episode touched on the moral issues and ramifications of cloning, and whether or not an individual has the right to strive for immortality by re-creating himself as a youngster. The second story, "Lullaby," tackles the controversial concept of surrogate motherhood and the far more troubling idea of harvesting living organ banks so that people in need of donor organs will not have to wait so long. The third and most impressive episode, "Azrael's Breed," is a thinly veiled story about drug addiction. In this case, however, the narcotic to which people are addicted is the chemical memories of recently dead people. Like adrenaline junkies, the folks addicted to this new drug go out and kill for the excitement ... just so they can relive it later ... through a needle. There are withdrawal symptoms, scenes of people shooting up with hypodermics, and even a subplot about a promising young poet who drops out of school and loses her life and her potential—all over her addiction to this most unusual of drugs.

These are good stories, well-told, and Tim Guinee manages to be focused and concentrated throughout, serving as the viewer's tour guide to a world of conspiracies and medical and ethical dilemmas. As he states in the pilot, "science is changing everything—a lot faster than we expected." That is the bailiwick of *Strange World*, and a concept whose time has come. It plays on people's fears that science is running out of control, playing God, and tampering with our lives in ways that are frightening. And, as all horror fans know, horror works best when it is related to a real life fear. In this case, our fears of science are perfectly matched for the substance of this series.

Like *Brimstone*, *Strange World* acquits itself well from a visual standpoint. Some attempt has been made to make the show stand out, imagery-wise, from others. It has a dark, grainy-look, not quite burned-out, but low key and menacing. Perhaps what is best about *Strange World* is the fact that it realizes that horror is at its best when it is smart. So, in fast succession the audience is expected to understand things like Munchausen-by-Proxy syndrome, growth hormones, variable dosing, nerve cell regeneration, and the like. Unlike *Prey*, a good show that would often stop to rehash the scientific data presented by the leads (ostensibly so the viewers could keep up), *Strange World* never assumes that its audience was anything less-than-knowledgeable and well-versed in its lingo. It is not the first series that has failed because it aimed too high. Where *Millennium* mined "end of the world" scenarios successfully for three years, *Strange World* should have been allowed to do the same about science-generated monstrosities.

On the other hand, some of *Strange World* is a little bit *X-File*-like. The mysterious "Asian Woman," for instance, is but a shadow of the complex Cigarette Smoking Man on the former series. She is a caricature here, and her relevance to the overall story of *Strange World* is not made obvious in the series' short run. It is also derivative and troubling to see another man/woman investigative team in

Turner/Sydney. Like Mulder, Turner is the believer (he even subscribes to Gulf War Syndrome internet sites) and like Scully, Sydney is a reality-grounded physician. This kind of imitative coupling failed on *Dark Skies*, and *The Burning Zone*, and it is both troubling and sad to see it resurrected once more for *Strange World*. Partners are fine, but why must the dynamic always be so derivative of Scully and Mulder? Why cannot the woman be the action lead, the believer, and the man be the skeptic for a change? Or is that too obvious also?

It is always dangerous to review a series that lives for such a short time. It is quite possible that *Strange World* would have answered successfully all the questions it raised during its first three episodes. On the other hand, it might have always remained confusing and derivative. The fact is, viewers and critics shall never know for sure. But when performances, stories, concepts, and production values are this good so early, there is sufficient reason to hope. *Strange World* should have been allowed to survive. At the very least, it should have been permitted to air all thirteen episodes in its roster.

## CAST AND CREDITS

*Cast:* Tim Guinee (Dr. Paul Turner); Sandra Quartermain (Major Lynne Reese); Vivian Wu (Asian Woman/Japanese Woman/Mysterious Woman); Kristin Lehman (Dr. Sydney MacMillan).

*Credits:* *Created by:* Howard Gordon and Tim Kring. *Supervising Producer:* Harvey Frand. *Production Designer:* Lance King. *Executive Producer:* Howard Gordon. *Editor:* Lori Jane Coleman. *Music:* Michael Hoenig. *Directors of Photography (various episodes):* Jon Joffin, Peter Wunstorf. *Consulting Producer:* Mick Johnson. *Co-Producer:* Ron French. *Producer:* Tim Minear. *Co-Executive Producer:* Manny Coto. *Story Editor:* John Chambers. *Associate Producer:* Tracey D'Arcy. *Original Casting:* Nan Dutton. *Additional Casting:* Coreen Mayrs. *Production Manager:* Ron French. *First Assistant Director:* Vladimir Steffoff. *Second Assistant Director:* Mark Currie. *Set Decorator:* Dominique Fouquel-Lemaitre. *Art Director:* Eric Norlin. *Property Masters:* Brent Lane, Alex Kutschera. *Costume Designer:* Jenni Gullett. *Key Hair:* Sanna Seppanen. *Key Makeup:* Connie Parker. *Special Effects Makeup:* Lindala Make-Up Effects, Inc. *Assistant to Mr. Gordon:* Shayne Wilson, Jose Molina. *Assistant to Mr. Coto:* Meredyth Smith. *Assistant to Harvey Frand:* Nancy Mosher. *Script Coordinator:* Neil H. Levin. *Writer's assistant:* Daniel Bolon. *Rerecording Mixers:* Larry Stensvold, Peter Elia. *Sound Mixer:* Tim Richardson, Gordon Anderson. *Script Supervisor:* Susan Lambie. *Technical Advisor:* Dr. Seke Emmai. *DaVinci Colorist:* Phil Azenzer. *Associate Editor:* Lisa Lessek. *Postproduction Coordinator:* Erica Bord. *Supervising Sound Editor:* Victor Torillo. *Music Editor:* Marty Woroski. *Special Effects Coordinator:* Andy Chamberlayne. *Stunt Coordinator:* J.J. Makaro. *Transportation Coordinator:* Mike Sassen. *Construction Coordinator:* Peter Grace. *Location Manager:* Scott Walden. *Production Coordinator:* Anita Mechon Truelove. *Assistant Production Coordinator:* Justin Peterson. *Camera Operator:* Mark Willis. *Gaffer:* Peter Slatter. *Key Grip:* Kim Olsen. *L.A. Casting Associate:* Anna Marie Donaghue. *Film Lab:* Rainmaker Digital Pictures. *Postproduction Audio:* Westwind Media. *Electronic Assembly:* Encore Video. Teakwood Lane Productions.

## EPISODE GUIDE

**1. "Pilot"** Written by Howard Gordon and Tim Kring; Directed by Mick Jackson; airdate: March 8, 1999; *Guest Cast:* Michael Moriarty (General Conway); Bill Sage (Nathan Burke); Arnold Vosloo (Assassin); Sarah-Jane Redmond (Cynthia Ballard); William MacDonald (Mr. Ballard); Sheila Moore

(Norma Burke); John Finn (Agent Hoffmann); Michael Mantell, Fulvio Cecere (Officer); Robert Lewis (F.B.I. agent); Jane Perry (Nurse).

Eight years ago, during the Gulf War, two U.S. soldiers, Turner and Burke, investigated a “hot zone” where American forces had bombed an Iraqi biological weapon site ... and the two men were subsequently contaminated. In the present, Turner has survived the deadly disease (acute aplastic anemia) because a mysterious organization has secretly been providing him with an unknown, untested antidote. Now the military and the organization want Turner to investigate a kidnapping apparently perpetrated by Turner’s old partner, Burke. Turner soon uncovers layers of conspiracy to determine that the kidnapped child, Jeremy Ballard, is in fact a clone of Burke, who, because of his disease, is still trying to stay alive and even achieve immortality of a sort.

**2. “Lullaby”** Written by Tim Minear; Directed by Joseph Scanlon; airdate: March 9, 1999; *Guest Cast:* John Finn (Agent Richard Hoffmann); Monet Mazur, Randle Mell.

A teacher is rushed to the hospital during the last trimester of her pregnancy and is informed that her baby has died, when in fact *something* has been taken away from her. Later, another woman expecting a baby is afraid that her child will be abducted or killed too, and Sydney and Paul investigate her doctor. He informs them that the mother-to-be is paranoid, and a surrogate mother to boot! Turner soon uncovers a conspiracy in which surrogate mothers are implanted not with children, but with healthy human organs, which are then removed from the womb and sold on the black market at high prices.

**3. “Azrael’s Breed”** Written by Manny Coto; Directed by Vern Gillum; airdate: March 16, 1999; *Guest Cast:* Lauren Velez (Detective Arias); Robert Knepper (Gil Sandefur); Melissa Crider (Celia Monroe); Mikela J. Mikela (Dana Monroe); Ron Souva (Larry Moses); Ryan Robbins (Bledsoe); Jenny Mitchell (Janice); Conor Topley (Chunky Kid); Shayn Solberg (Pony-Tailed Kid); Dalios Blake (Police Officer #1); Kristine Petzold (Nurse); Alessandro Julian (Ennis).

A series of “accidental” deaths are suspected to be murder when evidence of hypodermic injections in the nasal passages is found in each of the victims. Turner investigates the case with a cop and suspects that a prominent neurologist, Gil Sandefur, is experimenting with sensory neuron grafts which can transfer memory from one being to another. A girl involved with Gil is a former poet who experiences a rush from reliving the dying moments of other people’s lives, and Turner hopes this memory “junkie” can lead them to Sandefur. Turner tracks down Sandefur, but as it turns out, Sandefur is already pursuing Turner, and hoping to give Paul a taste of this unusual “high.”

## UNAIRED EPISODES

**4. “Spirit Falls”** Written by Todd Kessler and Tim Minear; Directed by Peter Markle; unaired.

Turner travels to the midwest to investigate the Jonestown-style mass-suicide of a “quiet” country town.

*Note:* This episode was originally to be aired on Tuesday, March 23, 1999, at 10:00 P.M., but was pulled from the schedule after *Strange World*’s cancellation.

**5. “Skin”** Written by Jessica Scott and Mike Wollaeger; Directed by Brett Dowler; unaired.

One of Sydney's former patients shows up at the hospital suffering from a rare and bizarre epidermal condition.

*Note:* This episode was originally to be aired on Tuesday, March 30, 1999, at 10:00 P.M., but was pulled from the schedule after *Strange World's* cancellation.

6. **“Man Plus”** Written by Howard Gordon and Thania St. John; Directed by Peter Markle; unaired.
7. **“The Devil Still Holds My Hand”** Written by John Chambers; Directed by Tucker Gates; unaired.
8. **“Rage”** Written by Manny Coto; Directed by James Whitmore, Jr.; unaired.
9. **“Aerobe”** Written by Manny Coto and Hans Tobeason; Directed by Dan Lerner; unaired.
10. **“Food”** Written by John Chambers; Directed by Tucker Gates; unaired.
11. **“Eliza”** Written by Tim Minear; Directed by Vern Gillum; unaired.
12. **“Down Came the Rain”** Written by Manny Coto and Jose Molina; Directed by Ian Toynton; unaired.
13. **“Age of Reason”** Information unavailable; unaired.

**G vs E (1999– )****CRITICAL RECEPTION**

“the best new show of the summer ... It’s sort of ‘Touched by an Angel to Kick Butt’ ... *G vs E* has a smashing visual style—oddball camera placements, tinted colors seeping into the scenes, jump cuts that would make Jean-Luc Godard’s neck snap ... and Brooks is a hoot ... a modern-day Shaft with end-of-the-century smarts and irony.”—Ken Tucker, *Entertainment Weekly*, July 20, 1999.

“wildly eccentric comedy-thriller that breaks from the gate feeling uncommonly hip and clever ... The actors play it all to deadpan perfection ... Tech credits are spiffy, particularly the artistically ambitious photography and makeup that help make for some agreeably cheesy f/x.”—Ray Richmond, *Variety*, July 16, 1999.

“best described as *Brimstone* goes goofy ... The overly violent show has some trouble being gritty and crazy at the same time, but the G in it outweighs the E ... Bottom line: can be devilishly funny.”—Erik Meers, *People*, July 26, 1999, page 27.

“An oh-so-droll comedy thriller ... the twin brothers Pate shrink from blatant sentimentality of the *Touched by an Angel* and *Highway to Heaven* sort, occasionally going a little too far to prove that they laugh in the face of death ... but it all makes for devilish fun.”—Barbara D. Phillips, *The Wall Street Journal*: “TV: Touched by the Devil,” July 12, 1999, page A26.

**FORMAT**

When washed-up journalist Chandler Smythe (Clayton Rohner) is killed by demons in a dark alley (on his birthday of all days), he leaves behind an unfinished life. He has not squared things with his delinquent teenage son, and there is a very good chance he could go to hell because he is an absentee father. Chandler is rescued from this unpleasant fate by the Corps, a top secret organization run by the Big Man, God! Chandler will have a second chance at life as an agent for the Corps so long as he combats the dark forces of evil.

It will not be an easy life, however. Chandler will have no superpowers, he is not allowed to have sexual intercourse, and worst of all, he is not able to contact anyone from his previous life ... not even his son. Operating out of a secret Corps headquarters/squad room inside Geraldo’s Casa De Tires, Chandler and his new partner, a jive-talking, afro-wearing refugee from the 1970s named Henry McNeil (Richard Brooks), fight the morlocks (mortals/warlocks), demonic villains attempting to sway human beings to the darkside. Hollywood happens to be the center of the action for morlocks and Emmanuel Lewis, Gavin McLeod, LeAnn Rimes, and Orrin Hatch, are all known morlocks. This evil-busting duo must also keep people called “Faustians” from making deals with the aforementioned morlocks. On occasion, Chandler and Henry are also helped by their put-upon superiors, Ford (Marshall Bell) and Decker (Googy Gress).

Such is the format of the USA Network hour-long horror comedy *G vs E*. What the above recapitulation of the series does not express, however, is that on this show, style is *all*. It is hip times

three. *G vs E* relishes in split screens (sometimes as many as three per shot), jump cuts, askew angles, slow-motion photography, freeze-frames, and the like. The interrogation sequence which opens the premiere, "Orange Volvo," is a sly parody of all those police "interview" sessions on *NYPD Blue*, right down to the shaky hand-held camera work. Premiering on Sunday nights at 8:00 in the summer of 1999, the slick and sassy *G vs E* almost instantly became a darling of critics and audiences alike for its audacious, stylish, and rambunctious mix of humor, hipness and horror. Hopefully, this battle between good and evil will be with us for a long time.

## HISTORY

In 1996, the Pate Brothers made a big splash with their low-budget film *The Grave*, a favorite of the independent film circuit, and it was not long before this talented duo was recruited by an ever-watchful Hollywood. The dramatic (and comedic) horror series *G vs E* is their first "establishment" effort, and it is a hoot through and through. Following in the tradition of *Forever Knight*'s third season, the series has been produced for airing on the cable network, USA, and the series started broadcasting first-run, hour-long episodes during the summer of 1999. Scheduled at 8:00 P.M. on Sunday nights, before other first-run dramas such as *Pacific Blue* and the popular *La Femme Nikita*, *G vs E* stars Clayton Rohner (*Star Trek: The Next Generation*: "Too Short a Season," *The Relic* [1997], *The X-Files*: "Rain King") as a man who returned from the grave to fight in the "Corps" against demons.

According to Josh Pate, this idea came from an unlikely source.

It all started with a dream ... One morning, my brother [Jonas] called me up and told me about this dream he had where he was killed in an alleyway and these people come and offer him a deal where he could stay on Earth and fight this secret war.<sup>1</sup>

If that (very) brief plot summary sounds somewhat reminiscent of *Brimstone*, the late lamented Fox 1998 cult show, it is deceptive. Instead of being a grim, atmospheric, graphic novel for television, *G vs E* is a hyper, silly throwback to the 1970s. With an opening credits sequence straight out of *Charlie's Angels* (down to the split screens and freeze frames), it is horror-hip rather than horror-dark. There is no moral relativism here, thank you very much! Drunk with its own cleverness, the series quickly became the highlight of the summer of 1999 (at least until *The Blair Witch Project* made such a splash), and it has been warmly received by critics who appreciate its knowing, self-reflexive humor and acid wit. The series has also snagged an important victory in the Nielsen ratings. Its debut in July of 1999 catapulted USA into the number one most watched basic cable station position. The first two episodes of the series also showed a 56 percent increase in viewership on the USA network for that time period.

Although only about seven episodes have aired by the time of this writing, it is safe to say that *G vs E* has found a niche by alluding simultaneously to 1970s cinematic and TV style and 1990s post-*Scream* post-modernism. A trademark (thus far) of the show has been its eccentric, comedic casting: Emmanuel Lewis (*Webster*) as an agent of evil in "Buried," Dawn Wells (*Gilligan's Island*), Charlene Tilton (*Dallas*) and Erin Moran (*Happy Days*) as co-conspirators in "Gee, Your Hair Smells Evil," and so forth. Deacon Jones also has a recurring bit part as the Corps training expert, and at the end of each episode he demonstrates (usually on a live candidate) offensive tactics such as "The Head Slap" and "The Rip Up," both of which could be employed against the Morlocks. Also adding to *G vs E*'s cool veneer is a bevy of weird musical artists who contribute songs to the episodes, including Boards of

Canada (“Music Has the Right to Children”), Burger/Ink (“Las Vegas”), Come (“Gently Down the Stream”), Guided by Voices (“Mag Earwhig”) and Nightmares on Wax (“Carboot Soul”).

A kind of *Shaft* meets *Charlie’s Angels* meets *Brimstone* meets *Touched by an Angel* meets *Starsky and Hutch* meets *The Prophecy*, the young *G vs E*, at least at this early date, seems destined for greatness in the Terror TV hall of fame. If it survives its first season and continues to so successfully mix scares with laughter, *G vs E* just might remain a memorable entry in the Terror TV Valhalla. Tune in.

## CRITICAL COMMENTARY

Proving that the turn of the century is a great time for the horror genre, *G vs E* has blasted its way onto our airwaves and really shaken things up. Like *The X-Files*, *American Gothic*, *Millennium*, or *Brimstone*, this is a contemporary series which can rightfully make the claim that it is as artistic as it is entertaining. Wes Craven, the director of numerous horror films, once made the point that horror and comedy are two genres which are intertwined, since both depend heavily on suspense, pacing, and timing. The end result may be different, a laugh rather than a gasp, but the mechanisms which deliver the gut punch or the punch line are identical. *G vs E* has taken that lesson to heart, a fact which results in one of the most amusing genre series to come this way in a long, long time.

The *Pulp Fiction* (1994) of modern terror television, *G vs E* has an uncanny knack to deliver laughs and chills at exactly the right moments and in the right proportions. Amazingly, it does so not only with its dead-on performances from series leads (the cool Brooks and the immensely likable Rohner) and good, amusing scripts, but through its very bizarre, very clever narrative structure. In particular, *G vs E* utilizes time and time’s passage to its advantage like no other series in history. It has no devotion to linear storytelling (hence the *Pulp Fiction* reference above) and instead manipulates time to heighten suspense, generate laughs, or involves viewers in the predicament of the week.

“Evilator” is a perfect example of this tendency. This episode opens with a bravura action sequence high inside a morlock-controlled sky rise, and a spectacular danger: Henry and Chandler become trapped in an elevator that has been “dropped” and is careening towards the ground ... and disaster. As the floors race by at a dizzying speed and the suspense is at an apex, the “Evilator” teleplay (by Marshall Page) shifts gears and gives us a flashback explaining how the agents found themselves in this unusual predicament. By cutting between deadly present and explanatory past, the creators of *G vs E* manage to lengthen the level of suspense throughout much of the hour. Where a falling elevator might be a two minute set-piece (at most) on most ordinary shows, *G vs E* manages to turn the situation into an episode-long threat! The story keeps flashing backwards and forwards so fast, sometimes for just a minute of nonsensical exposition, that heads are nearly spinning. Another good early show, “Airplane,” does the same thing: marooning Chandler and Henry on a doomed airliner and then working backwards to the beginning of the drama before, finally, resolving the teaser’s heart-pounding dilemma.

“Buried” is another show which utilizes time in an unusually effective manner. Henry is seen relaxing at home when he gets a call from Chandler requesting help. Chandler has been buried alive in a coffin, and water is leaking in from somewhere. For the rest of the episode, Henry goes in search of Chandler, trying to find his partner before he drowns or asphyxiates in his own coffin. Making matters worse, Chandler has no idea where he is, because he lost consciousness after an encounter with a morlock. In this case, the threat is immediately established, and the remainder of the hour-long show cross-cuts



mercilessly between Henry's very unlucky search for Chandler (which involves, of all things, a transsexual dominatrix) and Chandler's ever-worsening plight, trapped in the death box. Unwilling to go gently, Chandler keeps reinserting himself in the picture (literally—via split screen) by phoning Henry at inopportune times, and the fast-paced suspense becomes unbearable. This is a “ticking clock” show, with every moment leading savagely to the point when Chandler either suffocates or drowns in his coffin. As Henry takes each step toward finding Chandler, he is dealt a reverse, and the camera cuts back obligingly to Chandler's woes: he is up to his neck, then up to his eyeballs in water! Yikes! Besides the “ticking clock” premise of “Buried,” which lends it incredible tension, this episode also has the audacity to cast Emmanuel Lewis as a morlock ... and then blow him to smithereens!

Episodes of *G vs E* move at warp speed, like *Brimstone* on acid, because sometimes four things are happening at once: the screen is literally “split” into four scenes, each one depicting various perspectives and various characters. In “Gee, Your Hair Smells Evil” Chandler is wired with a camera by an evil morlock and forced to invade Corps Headquarters. The pace grows frenetic as the episode shows us (simultaneously): Chandler entering the establishment and “gliding” through the office (mimicking a trick seen in many Spike Lee films), the camera's (i.e., Chandler's) perspective as he enters the building; the morlock agent watching this information on a monitor; and, finally, poor Henry being tortured on a gazebo (?), being jolted with electric shocks. Thus, on one TV screen, these four viewpoints manage to give the audience an overload of important and relevant plot/character information. The close shot on Chandler's entrance in the Corps shows his trepidation as he is forced to become a traitor to the cause. The shot from the hidden “Chandlercam” tells the audience where the agent is heading, and reveals the obstacles in his way. The shot of the morlock reminds us who is behind the treachery, and that there is no opportunity to back out of it. And, finally, the shot of Henry in danger clarifies the reason why Chandler has turned double agent. This kind of sensory overload is challenging, brilliantly done, and fast-paced.

So often, television fails by assuming that the audience is stupid, or simply unable to grasp important plot details. *Poltergeist: The Legacy* and *Prey* are two series, both good—all considered—which tell the audience everything at least twice. Flashbacks (in black and white) are inserted in both shows to remind viewers who the bad guys are, or to clarify bits of data, and background detail that is obvious to any viewer who is not catatonic. In one episode of *Prey*, the new species member named Tom leaves behind an article of clothing in Sloan's apartment. The camera showed us this action once (in master shot), then provided a black and white flashback of the same action so the audience would be *sure* to understand where Sloan found the clothing, which she then used to analyze Tom's DNA. *G vs E* very commendably takes the opposite approach. It overloads the audience with so much information that viewers are literally dared to keep up. This show *moves*, and it does so with sure footing.

At the same time that *G vs E* brilliantly deploys jump cuts, freeze frames, slow-motion photography, split screens, high and low angles, and the like, it also manages to be dead-on with its satirical commentary. One episode, “To Be or Not to Be ... Evil,” takes on the career of Kevin Williamson, the writer who rose to fame with the screenplay for *Scream* (1996), cemented that fame by writing *I Know What You Did Last Summer* (1997), and then established what will undoubtedly be a long career in the industry by creating the teen-angst TV series *Dawson's Creek* (1998– ). By *G vs E*'s way of thinking, the only *possible* way that someone could manage this degree of instant success would be by signing a Faustian deal with the devil! The episode mocks Williamson's trademark brand of “chic” slasher pictures by showing five “fashionable” (yet strangely identical ... ) posters for each of the sequels to *I Saw What You Did Last Winter* (about a killer janitor who mutilates teenagers with a shovel). The

episode also dramatizes a scene from an insipid, psycho-babble-laden *Dawson's Creek*-style TV drama called *Dunbar's Lake*, and even shows the Williamson stand-in (named Todd Charleston) to be an egomaniacal little tyro. At the same time that "To Be or Not to Be ... Evil" pokes fun at Kevin Williamson's meteoric rise to fame, it takes aim at America's culture of celebrity.

To wit: A tempted Harry signs a Faustian deal with the Devil after getting a taste of how "rewarding" it is to be popular, rich, and part of the Hollywood elite. In a culture where everybody wants to be a star, and everybody gets their "fifteen minutes of fame," *G vs E* reminds us, in its own light-handed fashion, that there is a price to pay for laying down alongside the insipid elite of the jet set.

*G vs E* takes punches at other figures and productions with equal vigor. Its opening episode, "Orange Volvo," begins with a long "police" interrogation scene of the deceased Chandler Smythe that mimics in style the umpteen Sipowitz/Simone interviews of perps in the popular but tiring *NYPD Blue*. The herky-jerky, hand-held camera; the deal laid out for the perp; the heavysset cop acting tough while the thinner one is more sympathetic ... all these clichés are carried over to *G vs E* with hysterical results. At the same time, this *NYPD Blue*-style informs the audience immediately about the content of the show. In one sense, *G vs E* is a police procedural and partner show, just like the cop drama it mimics. On the other hand, as in this interview sequence, it will take those ideas (partners/cops/bad guys on the street) and reinvent them.

The ingenuity of *G vs E* is sometimes simply startling. In one episode, Chandler, Henry, Ford, and Decker are eating french fries at an L.A. burger joint when a morlock stages a drive-by shooting. The heroes of the series are splattered not with red blood ... but with the red ketchup from their fries, though the result looks very much the same. In the aforementioned "Evilator," a young girl is a double agent for the morlocks and Decker gets her to confess by dismembering and decapitating her collection of Barbie dolls! This show is weird, but fun.

Another of *G vs E*'s many delights is its celebrity cameo appearances. Erin Moran, a former *Happy Days* cast member who once came out in the press to "pray" for her former co-workers, plays an agent of evil in "Gee, Your Hair Smells Evil," along with Charlene Tilton, Jill Whelan, and Dawn Wells. Emmanuel Lewis and film star Theresa Russell have also shown up ... as morlocks and Faustians, naturally, to good comedic effect. These cameos never threaten to overtake the show, but they do add an additional degree of fun to the bizarre proceedings.

Although it may be a bit early to make such a declaration, *G vs E* is one of modern Terror TV's ten best series. Its vivid imagery, its great performances, its whacked vision of the world, its celebrity cameos, and its brilliant use of film technique make it a superb series that deserves to live a long life.

## CAST AND CREDITS

*Cast:* Clayton Rohner (Chandler Smythe); Richard Brooks (Henry McNeil); Marshall Bell (Ford); Googy Gress (Jack Decker).

*Credits:* *Created by:* Josh and Jonas Pate. *Casting:* Jennifer Fishman, Amy McIntyre-Britt, Anya Colloff. *Music:* Will Thomas. *Production Design:* Mark Hutman. *Editor:* Joshua Butler. *Director of Photography:* Michael Grady. *Associate Producer:* Barclay Dereau. *Co-Producer:* Mark T. Hyatt. *Executive Producers:* Jonas and Josh Pate, Paul Biddle. *Unit Production Manager:* Nancy Noever. *First Assistant Director:* Tony Steinberg. *Second Assistant Director:* Valerie Ann Bleth. *Location*

*Manager:* Douglas Dresser. *Production Coordinator:* Paul A. Lucero. *Set Decorator:* Jennie Harris. *Lead Man:* J.M. Vasquez. *Set Dressers:* Graeme Perez, Justin Mulchy, Chad Vachter. *Costume Designer:* Erik LeMass Pattner. *Property Master:* Matthew Cavaliero. *Visual Consultant:* Austin Gorg. *Script Supervisor:* Gene Babcock. *Camera Operator:* Patrick Rouisseau. From Rockfish Films/USA Network.

## EPISODE GUIDE

**1. “Orange Volvo”** Written and directed by the Pate Brothers; airdate: July 18, 1999; *Guest Cast:* Tony Denman, Deacon Jones (Himself); Susie Parks, Blake Heron, Ashley Rogers, Troy Evans,

Reporter Chandler Smythe is murdered by a demon in an alley after attending his own birthday party. He awakens to find himself in the headquarters for the Corps, and is given a chance to redeem himself by becoming an Agent for Good, a warrior in the battle against evil. Chandler meets his new partner, Henry, and then is assigned his first task: to determine who really killed a cop, even though a Russian shopkeeper was framed for the crime. After a sting at L.A. Burger ends in sniper fire and Henry’s car is stolen (by Chandler’s delinquent son), other means of solving the case and stopping a demon called El Aurens are required.

**2. “Men Are from Mars, Women Are Evil”** Written by Bill Wolff; Directed by Josh Pate; airdate: July 25, 1999; *Guest Cast:* Deacon Jones (Himself); Shannon Elizabeth (Cherry Vallance); Mariah O’Brien (Marcy); Ron Marasco, Michael Cudlitz, Bart Braverman, Lorna Scott, Lisa Boyle (Gigi Peaks); Dana Patrick (Candy Striper); David Stifel (Mel Scheinberger); Kimberly Huie (Nisco); Chris Owens (Trekkie); James Brown-Orleans (South African); Christopher Neiman (Cop #1); Adam Ritz (Cop #2); Phyllis Franklin (Neighbor).

Chandler is arrested for the murder of Cherry Vallance, a beautiful red-headed stripper who was really killed by a Faustian-turned-morlock named Dr. Love. Chandler met with Cherry at the House of Pies and was charmed by her sweet nature, but he had to be careful not to break the Corps edict about having sexual intercourse. The cops grill Chandler about his role in the murder, aware of his suspicious visit to Ye Olde Porn and Comic Shoppe to find the exact brand of “Death” card left on the scene of the crime by Dr. Love. Henry springs Chandler from police custody to lay a trap for Dr. Love.

**3. “Buried”** Written and directed by Josh Pate; airdate: August 1, 1999; *Guest Cast:* Deacon Jones (Himself); Emmanuel Lewis (Himself); Tony Denman, Susie Park, Reno Wilson, Michael Paul Chan, Frank Roman, Thomas Burr; Ruben Madera, Wells Rosales, Franklin Hernandez, Marco Roe (Gang Members).

A claustrophobic Chandler awakens after working on the Culpepper case to find himself in a coffin, buried alive, with water leaking in! While Chandler recounts (on his cell phone) how he came to be in this dire situation after trying to prevent professional boxer Terry Culpepper from making a deal with the Devil, Henry searches in vain for his missing partner. A comedy of errors ensues as the moments tick away and Harry finds himself besieged by bad drivers, thrown into a car trunk, captured by Latino thugs, and prepared for human sacrifice by a satanist drag queen. Henry learns that the morlocks want to exchange Chandler for the freedom of a vicious morlock leader: Emmanuel Lewis.

**4. “Gee, Your Hair Smells Evil”** Written by Josh and Jonas Pate; Directed by Jonas Pate; airdate: August 8, 1999; *Guest Cast:* Deacon Jones (Himself); Susie Park (Walker); Cyd Strittmatter, Pedro

Balmaceda, Ray Proscia, Dawn Wells (Herself); Charlene Tilton (Herself); Erin Moran (Herself); Jill Whelan (Herself).

Ford is criticized by his superior, Koslo, even though Faustian renunciation is on the rise in Hollywood. In response, Ford sends Chandler and Henry to get a renunciation out of Gregor, a man who went from flunking cosmetology school to being the hair-stylist to the rich and famous. Not only must the duo help this Faustian, they must target his morlock, the villainous Morgan Le Fay, and defeat her evil plans for world domination. When a renunciation goes bad, Henry is captured and forced to endure the brutal “Torture-Lux” while Le Fay forces Chandler to transmit footage of the secret Corps headquarters and steal the agent register.

**5. “Airplane”** Written and directed by Josh Pate; airdate: August 15, 1999; *Guest Cast:* Deacon Jones (Himself); Fred Willard (Sam Kleinhouser); Pat Skipper (Ray Lee Morris); Marianne Filali (Esmerelda); Ric Sarabia (Farley Pollat); Kyle Colderidge-Kruege, Jan Hoag, Shelly Malil, Colin Campbell, Caren Saiset, Brad Miller (Tony Collins); Dora Rowe (Jenny); Michelle Ruben (Groupie); Foofer Beachwood (Bonnie Smythe); Brian Card (Middle Agent Man #1); Doug Tempos (Middle Agent Man #2).

Henry and Chandler board a plane with a morlock assassin in their custody. In midair, the minion of evil breaks free, kills the pilot, and parachutes from the plane. The Corps tries to talk Chandler out of the deadly in-flight situation, but he accidentally dumps all remaining fuel, worsening the situation. Knowing the end is near, Henry breaks Corps laws and gets laid by a beautiful Spanish agent named Esmerelda, even as Chandler realizes there are still two parachutes aboard.

**6. “Evilator”** Written and directed by Marshall Page; airdate: August 22, 1999; *Guest Cast:* Deacon Jones (Himself); Mary Mara (Leona); Marianne Filali (Esmerelda); Nicolette Little (Sandy Blair); Joseph Campanella (Dr. Townsend); Shaun Toub, Carl Anthony Payne II, Ezra Buzzington, Jay Michael Ferguson.

During a botched rescue attempt for the Corps, Henry, Chandler and a female hostage are trapped inside an elevator in the Magog Pharmaceutical Company. The hostage is Leona, the best Corps agent in the business, an operative who has been working undercover to stop production of a pill which would cloak the gruesome appearance of the morlocks. In response to the incursion, the morlocks, commanded by Dr. Townsend, drop the elevator in the massive skyrise, sending Henry, Chandler, and Leona spiraling downwards to their doom. With only a few seconds left to live, Chandler suggests that they depend on an old urban legend and jump at the final moment of elevator impact.

**7. “To Be or Not to Be ... Evil”** Written by David A. Kleiler; Directed by Dan Ireland; airdate: August 29, 1999; *Guest Cast:* Deacon Jones (Himself); Susie Park (Walker); Walter Olkewitz (Gus Wine); T.J. Thyne (Todd); Ian Abercrombie (Ray); Jessica Harper, David Deluise, Barry Sobel, Andy Milder, Jean Kasem, Theresa Russell (Resa Tussle); Richard Stuart (Dunbar); Holly Towne (Doomed Blonde); Sticky Fingaz (Rapper); Linda Porter (Mather); Paul Bartel (Photographer); Daphney Damareaux (Sitcom Wife).

Henry and Chandler become extras on the set of a hospital show called “On Call” to find out if a guest star, Gus Wine, has made a Faustian deal in exchange for his newfound stardom. On the set, Henry is asked to audition for a morlock producer responsible for the slasher franchise *I Saw What You Did Last Winter* and the teen psychobabble drama “Dunbar’s Lake.” After a successful callback, Henry

becomes enamored with the possibility of fame and signs a Faustian blood contract. When Henry becomes a big star, he claims he is simply under “deep cover,” but Chandler is afraid he has lost his friend and partner to the morlocks.

*Postscript:* After its summer run on USA, *G vs E* was renamed *Good Versus Evil*, toned down to be more traditional, sold to the Sci-Fi Channel ... and promptly cancelled. Ahead of its time, *G vs E* is nonetheless a memorable, high quality production in its first incarnation.

*Angel* (1999– )

## CRITICAL RECEPTION

“... riskier ... more audacious from the norm ... an atmosphere entirely different from *Buffy*’s ... fully satisfying across a whole range of emotions.”—Ken Tucker, *Entertainment Weekly*, December 3, 1999.

## FORMAT

In Joss Whedon’s sequel to *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, *Angel*, the vampire with a soul (played by David Boreanaz), opens up his own detective agency in Los Angeles. His mission: to help lost souls fight evil, and find his own redemption in the process. *Angel* is aided in this quest by Cordelia Chase (Charisma Carpenter) and Doyle (Glenn Quinn), a demon with prophetic visions. *Angel* also frequently crosses paths with L.A.P.D. officer Kate Lochley (Elizabeth Rohm). After Doyle is killed in the middle of the first season, his powers of prophecy are passed on to Cordelia, and former Vampire-Watcher, Wesley Price (Alexis Denisof), joins the team. During the course of the first season, *Angel* butts head with an evil law firm called Wolfram & Hart, renegade slayer Faith (Eliza Dushku), and a variety of demons with unique powers.

## HISTORY

During *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*’s well-received third season on the air, Whedon announced that *Angel*, the angst-ridden 244-year-old vampire, would soon be featured in a spin-off of the popular WB hit. The series was to pick up with *Angel* moving to Los Angeles (and leaving behind the love of his very long life, Buffy Summers). *Angel*’s overriding goal would be to make “amends” for his centuries on Earth as a brutal, murderous vampire.

As the fall of 1999 neared, rumors flew fast and thick about the details of *Angel*. The first was that the series was going to be a variation on *Charlie’s Angels* with *Angel* operating behind the scenes and directing the action of three lovely ladies (during the daytime): Cordelia, Kate and Faith (Eliza Dushku), the slayer who had turned “bad” during *Buffy*’s third year. When Eliza Dushku turned down a continuing role on the series, most people figured that the *Charlie’s Angels* format was out, even though Cordelia has been described in press reports as being *Angel*’s “Girl Friday.”

Another change came rapidly. The character named Whistler, who had been seen from time to time on *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, was removed. Replacing Whistler, Whedon created a character named Doyle—a friendly demon. To the dismay of many fans, Doyle would not survive the first year.

Lensed at night in L.A., Sarah Michelle Gellar, Eliza Dushku, James Marsters and Seth Green all made exciting, provocative appearances on *Angel*, and reminded viewers of the connection between Joss Whedon ventures.

*Angel* has been termed a darker, more adult version of *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, one that labors on the idea of redemption. This is an interesting idea, as *Buffy* and her friends ascend to college and a

brighter tomorrow ... and Angel continues, forever, in the dark. The focus on Angel making “amends” also rings of the Nick Knight syndicated melodrama, *Forever Knight*.

*Angel* faces a challenge in its second season from James Cameron’s FOX series *Dark Angel*, airing opposite it on Tuesday. Perhaps *Angel* has little to worry about, since *TV Guide*’s critic Matt Roush named it one of the best new shows of the 1999-2000 season.

### CRITICAL COMMENTARY

Though *Angel*’s first season only sometimes featured the perfect blend of humor and action so evident in *Buffy*, overall the series seems to be on solid ground. David Boreanaz is an interesting, talented lead, and the moments wherein he breaks out of “solemn” mode to unexpectedly dance at a party or sing karaoke, really grant the show great humor and vitality. It is the old Mr. Spock principle. The best moments on *Star Trek*, inevitably, were those when the logical Vulcan broke out of dour mode to reveal emotion. The same thing applies to *Angel*. Boreanaz really understands both sides of the character: the pathos and the humor. *Angel* is the stronger for this actor’s insightful approach to what could have been a cardboard “super hero” role. Charisma Carpenter’s Cordelia retains her hard, sarcastic edge on this series, and Alexis Denisoff is an effective surrogate for *Buffy*’s Giles. No doubt, the team is a good one, and it gels better in each successive episode.

*Angel* has also staked out separate ground from *Forever Knight*, with something *Forever Knight* lacked: real wit, and real humor. Hopefully *Angel* will live for many seasons; it’s already well on its way...

### CAST & CREDITS

*Cast:* David Boreanaz (Angel); Charisma Carpenter (Cordelia Chase); Glenn Quinn (Doyle); Elizabeth Rohm (Kate Lochley); Alexis Denisof (Wesley).

*Credits:* Created by: Joss Whedon and David Greenwalt. *Consulting Producer:* Marti Noxon. *Producers:* Tim Minear and Kelly Manners. *Co-Producer:* James. A. Contner, Skip Schoolnik. *Executive Producers:* Sandy Gallin, Gail Berman, Fran Rubel Kuzui, Kaz Kuzui, Joss Whedon, David Greenwalt. *Consulting Producer:* Howard Gordon. *Associate Producer:* R.D. Price. *Director of Photography:* Herbert Davis. *Production Designer:* Stuart Blatt. *Editor:* Mark Goldman.

### EPISODE GUIDE

**1. “City of”** Written by Joss Whedon and David Greenwalt; Directed by Joss Whedon; airdate: October 5, 1999.

Angel moves to Los Angeles, and teams up with unemployed actress (and ex-Sunnydale resident) Cordelia Chase. Together, they work with good-guy demon Doyle to form a detective agency and fight evil.

**2. “Lonely Hearts”** Written by David Fury; Directed by James A. Contner; airdate: October 12, 1999.

Angel stakes out a bar to find a killer who targets lonely hearts, teaming up with beautiful cop, Kate Lochley.

**3. “In the Dark”** Written by Douglas Petrie; Directed by Bruce Seth Green; airdate: October 19, 1999.

Two visitors from Sunnydale spell trouble for Angel when they grapple over an artifact that allows vampires to walk in the sunlight.

**4. “I Fall to Pieces”** Written by David Greenwalt; Directed by Vern Gillum; airdate: October 26, 1999.

Angel must protect a woman from a killer who can disassemble and re-assemble his own body parts.

**5. “Room w/a Vu”** Written by Jane Espenson; Directed by Scott McGinnis; airdate: November 2, 1999.

Cordelia moves into an apartment inhabited by a ghost.

**6. “Sense and Sensitivity”** Written by Tim Minear; Directed by James A. Contner; airdate: November 9, 1999.

**7. “The Bachelor Party”** Written by Tracey Stern; Directed by David Straiton; airdate: November 16, 1999.

Doyle attends the bachelor party of his ex-wife’s new fiancée ... and finds out that he will be the “guest of honor.”

**8. “I Will Remember You”** Written by David Greenwalt and Jeannine Renshaw; Directed by David Grossman; airdate: November 23, 1999.

Buffy visits Los Angeles just as Angel unexpectedly becomes fully human, infected by the blood of an unusual demon.

**9. “Hero”** Written by Howard Gordon and Tim Minear; Directed by Tucker Gates; airdate: November 30, 1999.

Doyle gives his life to save homeless demons from a fascist, demonic army and their doomsday weapon.

**10. “Parting Gifts”** Written by David Fury and Jeannine Renshaw; Directed by James A. Contner; airdate: December 14, 1999.

Cordelia inherits Doyle’s ability to read visions from the Powers that Be, while Wesley, a “rogue demon hunter,” joins the team.

**11. “Somnambulist”** Written by Tim Minear; Directed by Winrich Kolbe; airdate: January 18, 2000.

**12. “Expecting”** Written by Howard Gordon; Directed by David Semel; airdate: January 25, 2000.

Cordelia awakens from a one-night stand with a human-appearing demon to find herself pregnant.

**13. “She”** Written by David Greenwalt and Marti Noxon; Directed by David Greenwalt; airdate:



February 8, 2000.

Angel helps a beautiful warrior as she frees her own kind from male subjugation on a trans-dimensional underground railroad.

**14. “I’ve Got You Under My Skin”** Written by Jeannine Renshaw; Directed by R.D. Price; airdate: February 15, 2000.

**15. “The Prodigal”** Written by Tim Minear; Directed by Bruce Seth Green; airdate: February 22, 2000.

Angel runs afoul of Kate’s father, a retiring police officer.

**16. “The Ring”** Written by Howard Gordon; Directed by Nick Marck; airdate: February 29, 2000.

Angel is forced to fight in gladiatorial games.

**17. “Eternity”** Written by Tracey Stern; Directed by Regis B. Kimble; airdate: April 4, 2000.

**18. “Five by Five”** Written by Jim Kouf; Directed by James A. Contner; airdate: April 25, 2000.

Angel is haunted by his existence as an evil vampire, and Faith arrives in Los Angeles ... to assassinate him.

**19. “Sanctuary”** Written by Tim Minear and Joss Whedon; Directed by Michael Lange; airdate: May 2, 2000.

Angel seeks to reform Faith—an idea the visiting Buffy Summers can’t stomach.

**20. “War Zone”** Written by Garry Campbell; Directed by David Straiton; airdate: May 9, 2000.

Angel teams with an African-American hero, Gunn, who fights vampires in the seedier parts of L.A.

**21. “Blind Date”** Written by Jeannine Renshaw; Directed by Thomas J. Wright; airdate: May 16, 2000.

A blind assassin arrives in L.A. to kill Angel, and Angel steals a prophetic scroll from Wolfram & Hart.

**22. “To Shanshu in L.A.”** Written and directed by David Greenwalt; airdate: May 23, 2000.

Angel learns that he will one day become human, even as his enemies at Wolfram and Hart seek to resurrect a deadly opponent: Darla.

# Part II

## If It Looks Like Horror, Sounds Like Horror...

In addition to the forty programs already studied in this text, there are several other TV series which include some horrific components along with other, perhaps more significant, elements. For instance, *Amazing Stories* (1985-87), the new *The Twilight Zone* (1985-87; 89), and the new *Outer Limits* (1995– ) are all genre anthologies which highlight science fiction, fantasy, and, from time-to-time, horror as well. *Psi Factor* (1996– ) and *Sightings* (1994-97) both purport to dramatize “real” paranormal happenings, and both feature hosts (Dan Aykroyd and Tim White, respectively) relating the events from complex control rooms that appear to be lifted from the production of *Rescue: 911*. *Sabrina the Teenage Witch* (1996– ) and *The Munsters Today* (1988-91) openly include such classic horror elements as witchcraft and “monsters,” respectively, but few would argue that these frivolous sitcoms deserve a place on the mantle beside *Kolchak: The Night Stalker* or *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*. However, for the sake of argument, this final, “catch all” chapter does list several series which feature horrific elements and motifs, but about which this author nonetheless feels queasy putting on a par with *Brimstone*, *The X-Files*, *Millennium*, and the like.

There are five basic categories for this section: The Anthologies; “Man-on-the-Run” Series; Horror Lite; Pseudo-Reality TV; and finally, Space ... The Horrific Frontier.

# THE ANTHOLOGIES

## 1. AMAZING STORIES (1985–1987)

### CRITICAL RECEPTION

“The first of Steven Spielberg’s *Amazing Stories* on NBC wasn’t very amazing. The other early installments of the series I have seen were also decidedly underwhelming. ‘Appalling Stories’ would be a more apt title for this century’s most ballyhooed TV arrival.”—Marvin Kitman, *The New Leader*: “Spielberg’s Appalling Disgrace,” October 7, 1985, page 21.

“a spotty skein of clichés, sentimentality and ordinary hokum ... special effects and production values are doubtless enticing, but too often they are used in the service of mushy sentimentality and questionable readings of the world we live in ... *Amazing Stories* turns out to be not so much monumentally dreadful as consistently disappointing. Skimpy story ideas ... don’t look weightier when dressed up in big budgets...”—John J. O’Connor, *The New York Times*: “A Skimpiness Undermines *Amazing Stories*,” January 5, 1985, page H25.

“This is one of the worst ten shows of all time, in any category. It’s a disappointment every week. You tune in and expect something, and get nothing ... It’s incredibly over-cute and over-produced ... with primitive premises about ... things that children could make up.”—Tom Shales, *The Washington Post* (reprinted in *The Best of Sci Fi TV*), Harmony Books, 1987, page 39.

“it is depressingly obvious that quality—along with the sense of adventure and spontaneity that the series promised—is in fairly short supply ... There is no denying that *Amazing Stories* ... looks good. Its content, however, is predictable and clichéd ... While nearly everything Spielberg does is, to a degree, apparently derivative of something he saw in his formative moviegoing years, the problem with *Amazing Stories* is that few of Spielberg’s episode concepts have been adequately thought out.”—Bill Kelley, *Cinefantastique*, Volume 16, number 2: “*Amazing Stories*: Handsomely Mounted Stories Prove Predictable and Clichéd,” May 1986, page 36.

### CAST AND CREDITS

*Created by:* Steven Spielberg. *Presented by:* Universal Studios and Amblin Entertainment. *Executive Producer:* Steven Spielberg. *Production Executives:* Kathleen Kennedy, Frank Marshall. *Producer:* David E. Vogel. *Supervising Producers:* Joshua Brand, John Falsey. *Associate Producers:* Steve Starkey, Stephen Semel, Skip Lusk. *Story Editors:* Peter Orton, Mick Garris. *Production Designer:* Rick Carter. *Editors (various episodes):* Joe Ann Fogle, Steven Kemper. *Unit Production Manager:* Kevin Donnelly, Joan Bradshaw. *First Assistant Director:* David L. Beans, John Liberti. *Second Assistant Director:* Martha Elcar, Jerry Ketchum. *Theme Music:* John Williams. *Additional Music (various episodes):* Michael Kamen, Billy Goldenberg, Fred Steiner. *Casting:* Johanna Ray, Mike Fenton. *Art Directors:* Richard B. Lewis, Lynda Paradise. *Set Decorators:* Catherine Arnold, Greg Garrison. *Main Title:* Ron Cobb. *Special Visual Effects:* Dream Quest Images. *Stunt Coordinator:* Roydon Clark. *Titles and Optical:* Universal Title.

### THE DETAILS

“The bigger they are, the harder they fall” is a truism that immediately springs to mind when remembering the 1985-1987 network anthology series, *Amazing Stories*. This is one TV project that boasted every advantage from the get-go. NBC executive Brandon Tartikoff had promised executive producer and series creator Steven Spielberg, once a director on *Rod Serling’s Night Gallery*, a two year, prime time network commitment (forty-four half-hour episodes), the exact time-slot he desired (Sunday nights at 8:00 P.M.), not to mention complete creative control over his own series with no network interference. Even more impressively, the NBC series was budgeted at a whopping \$800,000 budget per half-hour, and its advertising budget alone could have paid for a feature film! Prominent film directors such as Martin Scorsese, Clint Eastwood, Peter Hyams, Danny DeVito, and Spielberg himself were recruited to helm the various episodes, another fact which seemed to promise high quality. At a press conference, Spielberg described the ideas underlining his new series:

We’re not playing it safe. A couple of the shows are really rather wiggly ... And other shows are action-packed and very visual ... *Amazing Stories* is a really mixed bag. It’s science fiction, it’s adventure, it’s comedy ... our shows really, really vary and you have to sample a few of them to see how similar we are to the old anthologies, and at the same time how unlike them we are too.<sup>1</sup>

Unfortunately, what emerged from this ideal set of circumstances was but an object lesson in humility, a recapitulation of yet another old Hollywood truism: “if it isn’t on the page, it isn’t on the stage.” Specifically, the stories on *Amazing Stories* (most from the mind of Steven Spielberg) proved to be dreadful retreads, one-note jokes, or special effects extravaganzas lacking a worldview, appealing characters, or even a rudimentary moral standpoint. So bad was this series, this juggernaut of a production, that it is now widely considered one of the worst (and most heavily hyped) anthologies in television history. Fortunately, horror is not the genre which owns *Amazing Stories*. On the contrary, the series only rarely strayed into Terror TV terrain, which is why it is covered (briefly) in this section rather than in detail elsewhere in the text.

Frankly, most of the almost four dozen stories on *Amazing Stories* defy categorization within any specific genre. “Mummy, Daddy” is an atrocious one-joke production in which a horror movie actor dressed as a Mummy faces misadventures in his costume of bandages as he races to the hospital to see his newly born child. Predictably, he is mistaken for a real monster by ignorant locals and pursued all over the countryside in a slapstick chase.

“Fine Tuning” finds potato-headed alien tourists landing on Earth (with cameras) to see their favorite TV stars and visit Hollywood. “Miscalculations,” perhaps the most juvenile of all the *Amazing Stories* episodes, finds teenager John Cryer accidentally spilling chemicals on a centerfold picture and bringing her to life. “The Mission” is an hour-long suspense yarn about an American bomber in World War II which loses its landing gear during mid-air combat. The plane and crew (including Kevin Costner!) are saved when a budding cartoonist draws the plane with bright yellow “cartoon” wheels on an illustration of the aircraft. Amazingly, the real life plane sprouts the cartoon wheels and lands safely.

When the stories were not as blatantly childish as those listed above, they are simply rehashes of other, better, anthology shows. “Ghost Train,” the *Amazing Stories* premiere, is a story about a sensitive grandpa’s dying wish: to be taken aboard a train which once crossed through the land where his grandson’s house now stands. In conception and story, this (premiere) episode of *Amazing Stories* mimicked *One Step Beyond’s* 1961 episode “Goodbye Grandpa,” which also involved an old man and

a “ghost” train. Spielberg’s episode has the (enormous) budget to dramatize the spectral locomotive destroying the living room of a suburban house in a highly destructive action set-piece, but it lacks the humanity and elegant simplicity of the far more memorable *One Step Beyond* episode.

The most horrific *Amazing Stories* episode, perhaps, is “Mirror, Mirror” starring Sam Waterston and *Poltergeist: The Legacy*’s Helen Shaver and directed by film-great Martin Scorsese. The story revolves around a horror writer who claims not to possess any fear of the monsters and villains featured in his own best-selling novels. The author learns a lesson in fear when he starts seeing a devilish, *Phantom of the Opera*-like apparition haunt him in reflective surfaces such as mirrors and table-tops.

The direction and suspense generated by this situation are tangible, but, as usual for this white bread series, the narrative ultimately goes wrong in any number of ways. First, the very concept of a killer seen only in mirrors and other reflective surfaces is also reminiscent of a *One Step Beyond* installment, in this case an episode called “The Clown.” Secondly, the *Amazing Stories* venture ends confusingly, with the haunted and hunted writer inexplicably turning into the monstrous apparition and throwing himself out of a window while screaming in abject horror. This conclusion makes no dramatic sense whatsoever, especially since the character played by Waterston is delineated in only the most rudimentary terms. He is arrogant and rude, but hardly a bad enough guy to merit such a grim fate. And how, exactly, is such a transformation accomplished? There is no mechanism, as in *The Twilight Zone*, to explain such a bizarre happening.

Although Clint Eastwood’s “Vanessa in the Garden” manages to be almost poetic in its visual imagery, most of the *Amazing Stories* canon generate only a half-hearted “huh?” from audiences who sense immediately that most of the stories fail to connect with them on any kind of meaningful dramatic level. Typical of this problem is “Life on Death Row,” an installment about a convict destined to be executed. The convict (Patrick Swayze) is struck by lightning during an escape attempt and miraculously granted the power to heal others, including a blind girl (the daughter of the prison warden). Despite this great gift, the inmate is still executed by the state. Then, after the electrocution is complete, he awakes, resurrected ... and the episode just stops ... as if the reels needed to be changed. There is no viewpoint on hand, no final irony to punctuate the action, no twist ending to put a spin on the story’s events, no comment at all on the preceding adventure. It is as if the show literally ran out of ideas as it went. What were audiences to feel about Swayze’s hardened convict? Did he deserve to live? To die? Had his gift reformed him? Could one great good repair a great evil? What were viewers to take from this particular “amazing” story?

Sadly, “Life on Death Row” is not alone in its dramatic failures. The best anthologies are inevitably those which feature some kind of narration, a voice to put a perspective on the adventure. *Amazing Stories* is conspicuous in its absence of a narrator. What would he or she have said in the case of “Life on Death Row,” “The Mission,” “Miscalculations,” or “Mummy, Daddy?” The stories are so empty, so banal, that no coherent or meaningful worldview could be imposed upon them. There is no evidence of a great thinker, a Rod Serling here, and that is one reason why there is no narrator. A narrator would have to give the series a sense of cohesion, and there is no cohesion.

Another pseudo-horrific story on *Amazing Stories* is “The Amazing Falsworth,” a little potboiler about a blindfolded “touch” psychic (Gregory Hines) who makes contact with a serial killer (Richard Masur) hiding out in his audience. Again, the suspense is wrung for everything it was worth by director Peter Hyams, but the writing functions on a dumb, basic TV level. Falsworth manages to repeat his mantra,

that his paranormal power is all “in the hands” at least five times during the half-hour, thus setting up the final punch line, a post-violence recitation of that supposedly “ironic” line. In the final moments, the psychic uses his fingers to pull the trigger on a shotgun, blowing apart the serial killer during a deadly scuffle. At this point, the recitation of “it’s all in the hands” is an obvious nudge, and a patronizing attempt to forward the story’s point. It’s all in the hands. IT’S ALL IN THE HANDS!! Get it? GET IT?

*Amazing Stories* was canceled by NBC the moment its two-year commitment was over, an expensive and much-hated failure. It is an anthology series with lavish production values and good casts, but its failure should remind producers that good stories make a show a success, whereas good production values only make for big expenses.

## EPISODE LIST

### •*First Season (1985-1986)*

1. **“Ghost Train”** Written by Frank Deese; Story by Steven Spielberg; Directed by Steven Spielberg; airdate: September 29, 1985.
2. **“The Main Attraction”** Written by Brad Bird and Matthew Robins; Story by Steven Spielberg; Directed by Matthew Robins; airdate: October 6, 1985.
3. **“Alamo Jobe”** Written by Joshua Brand and John Falsey; Story by Steven Spielberg; Directed by Michael Moore; airdate: October 20, 1985.
4. **“Mummy, Daddy”** Written by Earl Pomerantz; Story by Steven Spielberg; Directed by William Dear; airdate: October 27, 1985.
5. **“The Mission”** Written by Menno Meyjes; Story by Steven Spielberg; Directed by Steven Spielberg; airdate: November 3, 1985.
6. **“The Amazing Falsworth”** Written by Mick Garris; Story by Steven Spielberg; Directed by Peter Hyams; airdate: November 5, 1985.
7. **“Fine Tuning”** Written by Earl Pomerantz; Story by Steven Spielberg; Directed by Bob Balaban; airdate: November 10, 1985.
8. **“Mr. Magic”** Written by Joshua Brand and John Falsey; Directed by Donald Petrie; airdate: November 17, 1985.
9. **“Guilt Trip”** Written by Gail and Kevin Parent; Directed by Burt Reynolds; airdate: December 1, 1985.
10. **“Remote Control Man”** Written by Douglas Lloyd McIntosh; Story by Steven Spielberg; Directed by Bob Clark; airdate: December 8, 1985.
11. **“Santa ’85”** Written by Joshua Brand and John Falsey; Story by Steven Spielberg; Directed by Phil Joanou; airdate: December 15, 1985.

12. **“Vanessa in the Garden”** Written by Steven Spielberg; Directed by Clint Eastwood; airdate: December 29, 1985.
  13. **“The Sitter”** Written by Mick Garris; Story by Joshua Brand and John Falsey; Directed by Joan Darling; airdate: January 5, 1986.
  14. **“No Day at the Beach”** Written by Mick Garris; Story by Steven Spielberg; Directed by Lesli Linka Glatter; airdate: January 12, 1986.
  15. **“One for the Road”** Written by James Bissell; Directed by Thomas Carter; airdate: January 19, 1986.
  16. **“Gather Ye Acorns”** Written by Stu Krieger; Story by Steven Spielberg; Directed by Norman Reynolds; airdate: February 2, 1986.
  17. **“Boo”** Written by Lowell Ganz and Babaloo Mandell; Directed by Joe Dante; airdate: February 16, 1986.
  18. **“Dorothy and Ben”** Written by Michael De Guzman; Story by Steven Spielberg; Directed by Thomas Carter; airdate: March 2, 1986.
  19. **“Mirror, Mirror”** written by Joseph Minion; Story by Steven Spielberg; Directed by Martin Scorsese; airdate: March 9, 1986.
  20. **“Secret Cinema”** Written and directed by Paul Bartel; airdate: April 6, 1986.
  21. **“Hell Toupee”** Written by Gail and Kevin Parent; airdate: Irvin Kershner; airdate: April 13, 1986.
  22. **“The Doll”** Written by Richard Matheson; Directed by Phil Joanou; airdate: May 4, 1986.
  23. **“One for the Books”** Written by Richard Matheson; Directed by Lesli Linka Glatter; airdate: May 11, 1986.
  24. **“Grandpa’s Ghost”** Written by Michael De Guzman; Story by Timothy Hutton; Directed by Timothy Hutton; airdate: May 25, 1986.
- Second Season (1986-1987)*
25. **“The Wedding Ring”** Written by Stu Krieger; Story by Steven Spielberg; Directed by Danny DeVito; airdate: September 22, 1986.
  26. **“Miscalculations”** Written by Michael McDowell; Directed by Todd Holland; airdate: September 29, 1986.
  27. **“Magic Saturday”** Written by Richard Christian Matheson; Directed by Robert Markowitz; airdate: October 6, 1986.
  28. **“Welcome to My Nightmare”** Written and directed by Todd Holland; airdate: October 13, 1986.

29. **“You Gotta Believe Me”** Written by Stu Krieger; Story by Steven Spielberg; Directed by Kevin Reynolds; airdate: October 20, 1986.
30. **“The Greibble”** Written by Mick Garris; Story by Steven Spielberg; Directed by Joe Dante; airdate: November 3, 1986.
31. **“Life on Death Row”** Written by Rockne S. O’Bannon; Story by Mick Garris; Directed by Mick Garris; airdate: November 10, 1986.
32. **“Go to the Head of the Class”** Written by Tom McLoughlin, Bob Gale and Mick Garris; Story by Mick Garris; Directed by Robert Zemeckis; airdate: November 21, 1986.
33. **“Thanksgiving”** Written by Robert C. Cox and Pierre R. Debs; Story by Harold Rolseth; Directed by Todd Holland; airdate: November 24, 1986.
34. **“The Pumpkin Competition”** Written by Peter Orton; Directed by Norman Reynolds; airdate: December 1, 1986.
35. **“What If…”** Written by Anne Spielberg; Directed by Joan Darling; airdate: December 8, 1986.
36. **“The Eternal Mind”** Written by Julie Moskowitz and Gary Stephens; Directed by Michael Riva; airdate: December 29, 1986.
37. **“Lane Change”** Written by Ali Marie Matheson; Directed by Ken Kwapis; airdate: January 12, 1987.
38. **“Blue Man Down”** Written by Jacob Epstein and Daniel Lindley; Story by Steven Spielberg; Directed by Paul Michael Glaser; airdate: January 19, 1987.
39. **“The 21 Inch Sun”** Written by Bruce Kirschbaum; Directed by Nick Castle; airdate: February 2, 1987.
40. **“The Family Dog”** Written and directed by Tim Burton; airdate; February 16, 1987.
41. **“Gershwin’s Trunk”** Written by Paul Bartel and John Meyer; Directed by Paul Bartel; airdate: March 13, 1987.
42. **“Such Interesting Neighbors”** Written by Mick Garris and Tom McLoughlin; Story by Jack Finney; Directed by Graham Baker; airdate: March 20, 1987.
43. **“Without Diana”** Written by Mick Garris; Directed by Lesli Linka Glatter; airdate: March 27, 1987.
44. **“Moving Day”** Written by Frank Kerr; Directed by Robert Stevens; airdate: April 3, 1987.
45. **“Miss Stardust”** Written by Thomas Szollosi and Richard Christian Matheson; Story by Richard Matheson; Directed by Tobe Hooper; airdate: April 10, 1987.



## 2. *THE TWILIGHT ZONE* (1985–1987; 1988–1989)

### CRITICAL RECEPTION

“The series gets off to a strong start ... technically far superior to anything that could be done on television 25 years ago.”—John J. O’Connor, *The New York Times*: “Premieres of *Twilight Zone* and *MacGyver*,” Friday, September 27, 1985.

“less well-written, conceived, plotted and narrated than its predecessor. Although the original was stronger, I must admit I found the copy scary ... What I miss most in the new version is Rod Serling’s voice.”—Marvin Kitman, *The New Leader*, October 7, 1985, page 22.

### CAST AND CREDITS

*Cast*: Charles Aidman (Narrator)/CBS; Robin Ward (Narrator)/Syndicated

*Credits*: *Executive Producer*: Phil De Guere. *Producer*: Harvey Frand. *New Twilight Zone Theme Music*: The Grateful Dead and Merl Saunders. *Original Twilight Zone Theme Music*: Marius Constant. *Creative Consultant*: Harlan Ellison. *Story Editor*: Rockne O’Bannon. *Art Director*: Jeffrey L. Goldstein, John Mansbridge. *Narrator*: Robin Ward. *Director of Photography*: Bradford May. *Editor*: Gary Blair. *Music*: William Goldstein. *Executive in Charge of Casting*: Bob Weiner. *Casting*: Gary M. Zuckerbrod. *Production Manager and Associate Producer*: Ken Swor. *Unit Production Manager*: Paul Wurtzel. *Associate Producer*: Mark Michaels. *Set Dressers*: Robert Zilliox, Rochelle Moser. *Property Master*: Jim Zemansky. *Script Supervisor*: Kenneth Gilbert. *Costume Designer*: Robert Moore. *Costume Supervisor*: Judith Grant. *Sound Design*: Mickey Hart. *Acoustic Consultant*: Betsy Cohen. *Production Sound Mixer*: Lowell Harris. *Rerecording Mixer*: Phillip Seretti. *Sound Editor*: Jeremy Hoenack. *Music Editor*: Robert Y. Takagi. *Music Supervision*: Robert Drasnin. *Lenses and Panaflex Camera*: Panavision. *Visual Effects*: Don Lee, Price Pethel, Kevin Cox, Maury Rosenfield, Peter Sternlight, Rioch Thorne. *Main Title Designed and Produced by*: Colossal Pictures. *Post Production Executive*: Cosmas P. Bolger. CBS Entertainment Productions; In Association with London Films; in cooperation with Persistence of Vision; distributed by MGM/UA Telecommunications.

### THE DETAILS

Though it is a series with no continuing characters or ongoing storyline, Rod Serling’s original *Twilight Zone* (1959-64) has managed to become an American TV classic, right alongside *Star Trek*, *I Love Lucy*, or *The Honeymooners*. It is a perennial: a show which speaks powerfully to multiple generations and is so popular and ubiquitous that its stories are known by a kind of conversational shorthand. Remember the one where Burgess Meredith was a bookish little guy who survived a nuclear war, but his glasses broke? Remember the one where Agnes Moorehead was fighting those tiny little aliens who were really space-suited human beings? Or the one with William Shatner fighting that gremlin on the wing of the plane? These classic TV stories are now part of our collective modern mythology.

By the time of this 1980s revival version of *The Twilight Zone*, there had been a 1983 feature film (produced by Steven Spielberg), a regular *Twilight Zone* magazine (shepherded by Serling’s wife, Carol), and even comic books celebrating Serling’s long-lived creation. Since Serling had passed away

in 1975, shortly after the cancellation of his second anthology, *Rod Serling's Night Gallery*, the new *Twilight Zone* was populated by a different array of artists. Executive producer Philip De Guere, story editor Rockne O'Bannon, and creative consultant Harlan Ellison provided the heart of the second team. They expressed their desire to see the series focus on "the mortal dreads ... the things we fear on a day-to-day basis translated into fantasy terms."<sup>2</sup> That explanation clarifies the reason *The Twilight Zone* is reviewed in this section, rather than in a chapter with the other "terror" series listed in this book: it is really only one part horror. It is also, in turns, science fiction, drama, and fantasy. One week the show is tongue-and-cheek ("Take My Life ... Please!"), one week it visits another planet ("The Star"), and then another week, it does manage to generate some scares ("The After Hours"). On the whole however, the second *Twilight Zone* enterprise seems much less concerned with generating thrills than was its predecessor. Because of this fact, and because the new creative voices are so strong, the new *Twilight Zone* has much less of Rod Serling in it than does *Night Gallery*, a far superior series to this less-than-perfect remake.

The revival version of *The Twilight Zone* began filming at CBS/Studio City, Stage Eight, on March 11, 1985,<sup>41</sup> and lasted for two years before being canceled by CBS because of low ratings. Its format was different from the 1959-1964 series in that each episode was an hour long and featured as many as three stories per sixty minutes (shades of *Night Gallery*). Early into the show's Friday night run, Harlan Ellison left the project because of network interference over story content. Still, two years on CBS was not to be the end of the legend either: a syndie version of *The Twilight Zone* materialized in 1988, this one guided by *Babylon 5's* future creator, J. Michael Straczynski. Ironically, this version of *The Twilight Zone* was done on the cheap (filmed in Canada), with its primary intention being to produce enough episodes (thirty to be exact) to make the earlier CBS two-year remake profitable in syndicated reruns. As Norman Horwitz, president of MGM/UA Telecommunications, commented on the situation:

It was a question of "Can we make more money?" ... And I'm paid to make money for the company. Our decision to do *The Twilight Zone* is based on history. It's a memorable name and it gives us a leg up, a genuine marketing advantage ... People would rather buy something they know, that gives them comfort, rather than something innovative and different.<sup>4</sup>

Rod Serling must have spun in his grave over that comment. *The Twilight Zone*, the great anthology of television and a genuine work of art, was now being sold as a "comfortable" series with "name recognition" rather than "innovative" or challenging series of good stories and artistic intent. Infuriated by the tenor of the Horwitz interview (for *Starlog*), new producer Straczynski quickly arrived on the scene to extol the merits of *his* version of a classic series:

It's a hundred percent closer to the old *Twilight Zone*, in terms of tone or atmosphere, than to the network version. What we've done is gone back and asked ourselves, "What would Rod do?" What made Serling's show so different from anything on television is that he dealt so deeply with humanistic qualities and primal emotions. We're definitely pointing the new episodes toward getting back to Rod's vision.<sup>5</sup>

Unfortunately, this was public relation hyperbole. The third incarnation of *The Twilight Zone* was the worst series of the lot, a show featuring dreadful thirty-minute episodes that could have come straight from the USA version of *The Hitchhiker* or *Alfred Hitchcock Presents*. In fact, some of the same behind-the-scenes "talent" from these less-than-stellar series was used on Straczynski's *The Twilight*

*Zone!* Cheap, poorly-written, and designed solely to make a syndicated rerun of *The Twilight Zone* profitable, this third incarnation was nonetheless a stepping-stone for Straczynski to create *Babylon 5*.

Still, the new *Twilight Zone* (network) version, did manage to generate a few interesting terror stories during its two years on the air, and it was certainly far better than its network competitor, *Amazing Stories*. At least it was not an embarrassment, like Straczynski's low-budget version. Among the more horror oriented stories were: "Shatterday," written by Harlan Ellison and directed by Wes Craven, which featured a young Bruce Willis facing down an evil doppelganger, "Small Talent for War" about alien invaders confronting the United Nations, and "The After Hours," a remake of the famous mannequin episode of the original *Twilight Zone*, with *Star Trek: Deep Space Nine*'s Terry Farrell in the Anne Francis role. "Gamma," a frightening Stephen King story, was also adapted for the series by Harlan Ellison, to genuinely frightening effect.

Before the series passed to syndication (and then ultimately, to reruns on TBS), it offered work to a variety of horror and genre directors including Wes Craven (*A Nightmare on Elm Street* [1984], *Scream* [1996]), Peter Medak (*The Changeling* [1981], *Species II* [1998]), William Friedkin (*The Exorcist* [1973]), Joe Dante (*Gremlins* [1984]), and Jeannot Szwarc (*Rod Serling's Night Gallery*, *Jaws II* [1979]). Guest stars on the new *Twilight Zone* were also quite notable with Melinda Dillon ("A Little Peace and Quiet"), Annie Potts ("Wordplay"), Meg Foster ("Dreams for Sale"), Terry O'Quinn ("Chameleon"), Adrienne Barbeau ("Teacher's Aide"), Piper Laurie ("The Burning Man"), Helen Mirren ("Dead Woman's Shoes"), Martin Landau ("The Beacon"), Gary Cole ("Her Pilgrim Soul"), Jonathan Frakes ("But Can She Type?"), Donald Moffat ("The Star"), Elliott Gould ("The Misfortune Cookie"), Jenny Agutter ("The Last Defender of Camelot"), Tom Skerritt ("What Are Friends For?"), and Terry Farrell ("The After Hours") making memorable appearances.

## EPISODE LIST

### • *First Season (1985–1986)*

**1A. "Shatterday"** Written by Alan Brennert; Story by Harlan Ellison; Directed by Wes Craven; airdate: September 27, 1985.

**1B. "A Little Peace and Quiet"** Written by James Crocker; Directed by Wes Craven; airdate: September 27, 1985.

**2A. "Wordplay"** Written by Rockne S. O'Bannon; Directed by Wes Craven; airdate: October 4, 1985.

**2B. "Dreams for Sale"** Written by Joe Gannon; Directed by Tommy Lee Wallace; airdate: October 4, 1985.

**2C. "Chameleon"** Written by James Crocker; Directed by Wes Craven; airdate: October 4, 1985.

**3A. "Healer"** Written by Alan Brennert; Directed by Sigmund Neufeld; airdate: October 11, 1985.

**3B. "Children's Zoo"** Written by Chris Hubbell and Gerrit Graham; Directed by Robert Downey; airdate: October 11, 1985.

**3C. "Kentucky Rye"** Written by Richard Krzemien and Chip Duncan; Directed by John Hancock; airdate: October 11, 1985.

- 4A. "Little Boy Lost"** Written by Lynn Barker; Directed by Tommy Lee Wallace; airdate: October 18, 1985.
- 4B. "Wish Bank"** Written by Michael Cassutt; Directed by Rick Friedberg; airdate: October 18, 1985.
- 4C. "Nightcrawlers"** Written by Phil De Guere; Story by Robert R. McCammon; Directed by William Friedkin; airdate: October 18, 1985.
- 5A. "If She Dies"** Written by David Bennett Carren; Directed by John Hancock; airdate: October 25, 1985.
- 5B. "Ye Gods"** Written by Anne Collins; Directed by Peter Medak; airdate: October 25, 1985.
- 6A. "Examination Day"** Written by Philip De Guere; From a story by Henry Slesar; Directed by Paul Lynch; airdate: November 1, 1985.
- 6B. "A Message from Charity"** Written by Alan Brennert; Directed by Paul Lynch; airdate: November 1, 1985.
- 7A. "Teacher's Aide"** Written by Steven Barnes; Directed by Bill Norton; airdate: November 8, 1985.
- 7B. "Paladin of the Lost Hour"** Written by Harlan Ellison; Directed by Alan Smithee; airdate: November 8, 1985.
- 8A. "Act Break"** Written by Haskell Barkin; Directed by Theodore J. Flicker; airdate: November 15, 1985.
- 8B. "The Burning Man"** Written by J.D. Feigelson; From a story by Ray Bradbury; Directed by J.D. Feigelson; airdate: November 15, 1985.
- 8C. "Dealer's Choice"** Written by Donald Todd; Directed by Wes Craven; airdate: November 15, 1985.
- 9A. "Dead Woman's Shoes"** Written by Lynn Barker; Story by Charles Beaumont; Directed by Peter Medak; airdate: November 22, 1985.
- 9B. "Wong's Lost and Found Emporium"** Written by Alan Brennert; From a story by William Wu; Directed by Peter Lynch; airdate: November 22, 1985.
- 10A. "The Shadow Man"** Written by Rockne O'Bannon; Directed by Joe Dante; airdate: November 29, 1985.
- 10B. "The Uncle Devil Show"** Written by Donald Todd; Directed by David Steinberg; airdate: November 29, 1985.
- 10C. "Opening Day"** Written by Gerritt Graham and Christopher Hubbell; Directed by John Milius; airdate: November 29, 1985.
- 11A. "The Beacon"** Written by Martin Pasko and Rebecca Parr; Directed by Gerd Oswald; airdate:

December 6, 1985.

**11B. "One Life, Furnished in Early Poverty"** Written by Alan Brennert; From a story by Harlan Ellison; Directed by Don Carlos Dunaway; airdate: December 6, 1985.

**12A. "Her Pilgrim Soul"** Written by Alan Brennert; Directed by Wes Craven; airdate: December 13, 1985.

**12B. "I of Newton"** Written by Alan Brennert; From a story by Joe Haldeman; Directed by Ken Gilbert; airdate: December 13, 1985.

**13A. "Night of the Meek"** Written by Rockne S. O'Bannon; Story by Rod Serling; Directed by Martha Coolidge; airdate: December 20, 1985.

**13B. "But Can She Type?"** Written by Martin Pasko and Rebecca Parr; Directed by Shelley Levinson; airdate: December 20, 1985.

**13C. "The Star"** Written by Alan Brennert; From a story by Arthur C. Clarke; Directed by Gerd Oswald; airdate: December 20, 1985.

**14A. "Still Life"** Written by Gerritt Graham and Chris Hubbell; Directed by Peter Medak; airdate: January 3, 1986.

**14B. "The Little People of Killany Woods"** Written and directed by J.D. Feigelson; airdate: January 3, 1986.

**14C. "The Misfortune Cookie"** Written by Steven Rae; From a story by Charles Fritch; Directed by Allan Arkush; airdate: January 3, 1986.

**15A. "Monsters!"** Written by Robert Crais; Directed by Bill Norton; airdate: January 24, 1986.

**15B. "Small Talent for War"** Written by Carter Scholz and Alan Brennert; Directed by Claudia Weill; airdate: January 24, 1986.

**15C. "A Matter of Minutes"** Written by Rockne S. O'Bannon; From a story by Theodore Sturgeon; Directed by Sheldon Larry; airdate: January 24, 1986.

**16A. "The Elevator"** Written by Ray Bradbury; Directed by Ralph Thomas; airdate: January 31, 1986.

**16B. "To See the Invisible Man"** Written by Steven Barnes; From a story by Robert Silverburg; Directed by Noel Black; airdate: January 31, 1986.

**16C. "Tooth and Consequences"** Written by Haskell Barkin; Directed by Robert Downey; airdate: January 31, 1986.

**17A. "Welcome to Winfield"** Written by Les Enloe; Directed by Bruce Bilson; airdate: February 7, 1986.

- 17B. "Quarantine"** Written by Alan Brennert; From a story by Philip De Guere and Steven Bochco; Directed by Martha Coolidge; airdate: February 7, 1986.
- 18A. "Gramma"** Written by Harlan Ellison; From a story by Stephen King; Directed by Bradford May; airdate: February 14, 1986.
- 18B. "Personal Demons"** Written by Rockne O'Bannon; Directed by Peter Medak; airdate: February 14, 1986.
- 18C. "Cold Reading"** Written by Martin Pasko and Rebecca Parr; Directed by Gus Trikonis; airdate: February 14, 1986.
- 19A. "The Leprechaun Artist"** Written and directed by Tommy Lee Wallace; airdate: February 21, 1986.
- 19B. "Dead Run"** Written by Alan Brennert; From a story by Greg Bear; Directed by Paul Tucker; airdate: February 21, 1986.
- 20A. "Profile in Silver"** Written by J. Neil Schulman; Directed by John Hancock; airdate: March 7, 1986.
- 20B. "Button, Button"** Written by Logan Swanson; From a story by Richard Matheson; Directed by Peter Medak; airdate: March 7, 1986.
- 21A. "Need to Know"** Written by Mary Sheldon; From a story by Sidney Sheldon; Directed by Paul Lynch; airdate: March 21, 1986.
- 21B. "Red Snow"** Written by Michael Cassutt; Directed by Jeannot Szwarc; airdate: March 21, 1986.
- 22A. "Take My Life ... Please!"** Written by Gordon Mitchell; Directed by Gus Trikonis; airdate: March 28, 1986.
- 22B. "Devil's Alphabet"** Written by Robert Hunter; Directed by Ben Bolt; airdate: March 28, 1986.
- 22C. "The Library"** Written by Anne Collins; Directed by John Hancock; airdate: March 28, 1986.
- 23A. "Shadow Play"** Written by James Crocker; From a story by Charles Beaumont; Directed by Paul Lynch; airdate: April 4, 1986.
- 23B. "Grace Note"** Written by Patrice Messina; Directed by Peter Medak; airdate: April 4, 1986.
- 24A. "A Day in Beaumont"** Written by David Gerrold; Directed by Philip De Guere; airdate: April 11, 1986.
- 24B. "The Last Defender of Camelot"** Written by George R.R. Martin; From a story by Roger Zelazny; Directed by Jeannot Szwarc; airdate: April 11, 1986.

- 25A. "The Once and Future King"** Written by George R.R. Martin and Bryce Maritano; Directed by Jim McBride; airdate: September 27, 1986.
- 25B. "A Saucer of Loneliness"** Written by David Gerrold; From a story by Theodore Sturgeon; airdate: September 27, 1986.
- 26A. "What Are Friends For?"** Written by J. Michael Straczynski; Directed by Gus Trikonis; airdate: October 4, 1986.
- 26B. "Aqua Vita"** Written by Jeremy Finch and Paul Chitlik; Directed by Paul Tucker; airdate: October 4, 1986.
- 27A. "The Story Teller"** Written by Rockne O'Bannon; Directed by Paul Lynch; airdate: October 11, 1986.
- 27B. "Nightsong"** Written by Michael Reaves; Directed by Bradford May; airdate: October 11, 1986.
- 28A. "The After Hours"** Written by Rockne O'Bannon; From a story by Rod Serling; Directed by Bruce Malmuth; airdate: October 18, 1986.
- 28B. "Lost and Found"** Written by George R.R. Martin; From a story by Phyllis Eisenstein; Directed by Gus Trikonis; airdate: October 18, 1986.
- 28C. "The World Next Door"** Written by Lan O'Kun; Directed by Paul Lynch; airdate: October 18, 1986.
- 29. "The Toys of Caliban"** Written by George R.R. Martin; Directed by Thomas J. Wright; airdate: December 4, 1986.
- 30. "The Convict's Piano"** Written by Patrice Messina; Directed by Thomas J. Wright; airdate: December 11, 1986.
- 31. "The Road Less Traveled"** Written by George R.R. Martin; Directed by Wes Craven; airdate: December 18, 1986.
- 32A. "The Card"** Written by Michael Cassutt; Directed by Bradford May; airdate: February 21, 1987.
- 32B. "The Junction"** Written by Virginia Aldridge; Directed by Bill Duke; airdate: February 21, 1987.
- 33A. "Joy Ride"** Written by Cal Willingham; Directed by Gil Bettman; airdate: May 21, 1987.
- 33B. "Shelter Skelter"** Written by Ron Cobb and Robin Love; Directed by Martha Coolidge; airdate: May 21, 1987.
- 33C. "Private Channel"** Written by Edward Redlich; Directed by Peter Medak; airdate: May 21, 1987.
- 34A. "Time and Teresa Golowitz"** Written by Alan Brennert; From a story by Parke Goodwin;

Directed by Shelley Levinson; airdate: July 10, 1987.

**34B. “Voices in the Earth”** Written by Alan Brennert; Directed by Curtis Harrington; airdate: July 10, 1987.

**35A. “Song of the Younger World”** Written by Anthony Lawrence and Nancy Lawrence; Directed by Noel Black; airdate: July 17, 1987.

**35B. “The Girl I Married”** Written by J.M. DeMatteis; Directed by Philip De Guere; airdate: July 17, 1987.

• *Third Season (1988–1989)*

*Note:* The third season of the new *Twilight Zone* was syndicated throughout America, and aired on different dates, and different times from city to city. Thus airdates have not been included below.

**36. “The Curious Case of Edgar Witherspoon”** Written by Haskell Barkin; Directed by Rene Bonniere.

**37. “Extra Innings”** Written by Tom Palmer; Directed by Doug Jackson.

**38. “The Crossing”** Written by Ralph Phillips; Directed by Paul Lynch.

**39. “The Hunters”** Written by Paul Chitlik and Jeremy Finch; Directed by Paul Lynch.

**40. “Dream Me a Life”** Written by J. Michael Straczynski; Directed by Alan King.

**41. “Memories”** Written by Bob Underwood; Directed by Richard Bugajski.

**42. “The Hellgrammite Method”** Written by William Selby; Directed by Gilbert Shilton.

**43. “Our Selena Is Dying”** Written by J. Michael Straczynski; From a story by Rod Serling; Directed by Bruce Pittman.

**44. “The Call”** Written by J. Michael Straczynski; Directed by Gilbert Shilton.

**45. “The Trance”** Written by Jeff Stuart and J. Michael Straczynski; Directed by Randy Bradshaw.

**46. “Acts of Terror”** Written by J. Michael Straczynski; Directed by Brad Turner.

**47. “20/20 Vision”** Written by Robert Walden; Directed by Jim Purdy.

**48. “There Was an Old Woman”** Written by Tom J. Aisle; Directed by Otta Hanus.

**49. “The Trunk”** Written by Paul Chitlik and Jeremy Finch; Directed by Steve DiMarco.

**50. “Appointment on Route 17”** Written by Haskell Barken; Directed by Rene Bonniere.

**51. “The Cold Equations”** Written by Alan Brennert; Directed by Martin Lavut.



52. **“Stranger in Possum Meadows”** Written by Paul Chitlik and Jeremy Bertrand Finch; Directed by Sturla Gunnarsson.
53. **“Street of Shadows”** Written by Michael Reaves; Directed by Richard Bugajski.
54. **“Something in the Walls”** Written by J. Michael Straczynski; Directed by Allan Kroeker.
55. **“A Game of Pool”** Written by George Clayton Johnson; Directed by Randy Bradshaw.
56. **“Room 2426”** Written by Jeremy Finch and Paul Chitlik; Directed by Richard Bugajski.
57. **“The Wall”** Written by J. Michael Straczynski; Directed by Atom Egoyan.
58. **“The Mind of Simon Foster”** Written by J. Michael Straczynski; Directed by Doug Jackson.
59. **“Cat and Mouse”** (written by Christy Marx; Directed by Eric Till.
60. **“Many Many Monkeys”** Written by William Froug; Directed by Richard Bugajski.
61. **“Rendezvous in a Dark Place”** Written by J. Michael Straczynski; Directed by Rene Bonniere.
62. **“Special Service”** Written by J. Michael Straczynski; Directed by Randy Bradshaw.
63. **“Love Is Blind”** Written by Cal Willingham; Directed by Gilbert Shilton.
64. **“Crazy as a Soup Sandwich”** Written by Harlan Ellison; Directed by Paul Lynch.
65. **“Father and Son Game”** Written by Paul Chitlik and Jeremy Finch; Directed by Randy Bradshaw).

### **3. THE OUTER LIMITS (1995–2000)**

#### **CRITICAL RECEPTION**

*“The Outer Limits, nineties-style can never hope to claim the same hallowed corner in our TV attic ... much sexier than its aged ancestor ... this update has actually moved closer to that other big anthology series of the era—The Twilight Zone. Some stories are intended to scare, but all are meant to make us think—morality tales, wrapped up with a homespun ‘thought of the week.’ That’s the only flaw in what is otherwise a largely entertaining series.”—Roger Fulton, and John Betancourt, The Sci-Fi Channel Encyclopedia of TV Science Fiction, Warner Books, New York, New York, 1997, page 336.*

#### **CAST AND CREDITS**

*Credits: Executive Producer: Pen Densham, Richard B. Lewis, John Watson. Co-Executive Producer: Jonathan Glassner. Producer: Brent Karl Clackson. Supervising Producer for Atlantis: Sue Valencia. Senior Executive Story Consultant: Chris Ruppenthal, Sam Egan. Executive Story Consultant: Naren Shankar. Executive Consultant: Joe Stefano. Associate Producer: Ben Brafman. Casting: Mary Jo*

Slater, Paul Weber. *Additional Casting*: Bette Chadwick. *Production Manager*: Lynn Barr. *First Assistant Director*: Shirley-Anne Parsons. *Second Assistant Director*: Ella Kutschera. *Theme*: Mark Mancina, John Van Tongeren. *Music*: John Van Tongeren, Randy Miller. *Director of Photography*: Rick Wincenty. *Production Designer*: Stephen Geaghan. *Editor*: Brad Rines. *Costume Designer*: Stephanie Nolin. *Art Director*: Susan Parker. *Set Decorator*: Barry Brolly. *Construction Coordinator*: Harry Griffin-Beale. *Property Master*: Jim Le Blane. *Special Effects*: Dave Allinson. *Camera Operator*: Paul Mitchnick. *Makeup Artist*: Fay Von Schroeder. *Hairstylist*: Susan Boyd. *Extras Casting*: Sandra Couldwell. *Chief Lighting Technician*: Ray Boyle. *Key Grip*: Dave Dawson. *Stunt Coordinator*: John Wardlow. *Production Coordinator*: Nancy Carrow. *Location Manager*: Greg Jackson. *Script Supervisor*: Lisa Wilder. *Sound Mixer*: Bill Skinner. *Transportation Coordinator*: Darla Nathorst. *Head Painter*: Roland Gervais. *Production Assistant*: Victoria James. *Script Coordinator*: Kathie Mackie. *Assistant to Producers*: Julie Fitzgerald, Robin Belk. *Production Accountant*: Gordon Smith. *Postproduction Supervisor*: Michael S. McLean. *Visual Effects Supervisor*: Steve Anker. *Makeup Effects, Design and Construction*: Tibor and Company. *Main Title Photography*: Jerry Uielsmman. *3D Animation*: Lost Boys Studios. *Visual Effects Executive*: Robert Habros. *Main Title*: Complete Post Visual Effects and Design. Produced in association with Global, A CanWest Company and Superchannel, Canada. Filmed on location in British Columbia, Canada. A Trilogy Entertainment Group and Atlantis Films Limited Production.

## THE DETAILS

*The Outer Limits* is another remake of a classic, in this case, of the Joe Stefano/Leslie Stevens collaboration of the mid-sixties. The original *Outer Limits* (1963-65) may rightly be named one of the greatest horror series of all time, although it pre-dates 1970, the starting point of this text. *The Outer Limits* featured great performances from recurring guests such as Robert Culp and Martin Landau, superb direction by Gerd Oswald and Byron Haskin, and creepy stories by the likes of Meyer Dolinsky (“The Architects of Fear”), Joe Stefano (“A Feasibility Study,” “Nightmare,” “The Zanti Misfits,” “It Crawled Out of the Woodwork”), and Harlan Ellison (“Demon with a Glass Hand,” “Soldier”).

Although all of these talents were quite remarkable, what actually made the original *Outer Limits* something of a TV landmark was its black and white, *film noir*-style photography. Eerie, moody, dark, and menacing, *The Outer Limits* of the 1960s was as much a “scare” show as a science fiction one. Each episode featured what the producers termed a “bear,” a monster-of-the-week, and these menacing creations often came lumbering out of the shadows to scare the living hell out of viewers. Sometimes the bears were stop-motion creations (“The Zanti Misfits”), sometimes they were puppets (“The Invisible Enemy”) and sometimes they were men in suits (“The Architects of Fear”). In whatever form they came, these monsters were always well presented; supported by ominous “mood” music and exquisite lighting. Besides these “bears,” the story focus in the original series was on how humans’ innovations in technology could open up a whole new realm of terror. A machine made evolution go wild in “The Sixth Finger,” a strange device landed a seemingly benevolent alien on Earth in “The Bellerio Shield,” and scientists planned a dangerous and frightening conspiracy in “The Architects of Fear.” Sometimes, science was even left out of the equation entirely, in gothic horror stories such as “The Guests,” about a haunted house that was actually an alien brain, or “monster” shows such as “The Invisible Enemy,” concerning a school of carnivorous sand sharks inhabiting the surface of Mars. The emphasis of the original *Outer Limits* was definitely “tolerable terror.” Terror was to be generated, but not in such a visceral way that would leave children unable to sleep at nights.

The remake of *The Outer Limits*, though longer-lived than its predecessor, is not in the same ballpark. A product of the 1990s genre glut, it is filmed in bland color, in the same humdrum manner as *Star Trek: Deep Space Nine*, *Babylon 5*, or *First Wave*. In other words, the images of *The Outer Limits* are not captured in any meaningful or artistic manner. Instead of being a new *film noir* masterpiece, it is an example of typical TV drama: lacking perspective, an overall worldview, and the skills to support its storylines with appropriate visuals. The vocabulary, the very grammar of film, is not being used effectively by this TV series, and it has forsaken terror along with black-and-white photography. Produced by Trilogy, the same company responsible for *Poltergeist: The Legacy*, the new *Outer Limits* is yet another Canadian production produced cheaply.

*The Outer Limits* began its new life with Showtime, the premium cable channel, before seeing its episodes shunted to syndication. The Showtime deal, as with *Poltergeist*, allows *The Outer Limits* creative personnel to utilize more gore and more nudity than network television would allow, but again, this kind of freedom results not in more provocative stories, only in more T & A. “Caught in the Act” is a prime example of the gratuitous nature of this creative “freedom.” In this story, a comely coed (Alyssa Milano of *Charmed*) becomes a nymphomaniac once affected by an alien object which lands, appropriately, in her bedroom. As Milano goes about having sex with handsome young men, there are plenty of opportunities for her to take her clothes off. In the end of this particular story, the moralizing, heavy-handed side of *The Outer Limits* comes to the forefront. The Milano/alien hybrid kills men with whom she has sex, until she finally makes love to her boyfriend. The emotion of “love” in the sex equation is enough to force the alien possessor out of Milano. Cue the violins, please.

For the most part, the writing on the new *Outer Limits* has been unexceptional, and the direction (from the likes of Paul Lynch, Timothy Bond, Joseph L. Scanlon, and Brad Turner), competent if uninspired. The filmic style of the original show is missing in action, and it has been replaced with an unnecessarily heavyhanded “straight” approach to the science fiction genre. Although it is terrific to see Larry Drake, Nana Visitor, Beau Bridges, Michael Dorn, Brent Spiner, Robert Patrick, Wil Wheaton, Helen Shaver, Saul Rubinek, Rene Auberjonois, and other genre celebrities stretching their talents in the anthology format, the new *Outer Limits* has a bland, dull feel to it. Worse than that, it has picked up on one of *Poltergeist: The Legacy*’s worst ideas: it has featured several of the dreaded “clip shows,” wherein sequences from various stories are blended and passed off as a “new” adventure.

## EPISODE LIST

### • *First Season (1995)*

1. **“Sandkings” (Parts I and II)** Written by Melinda Snodgrass; Story by George R.R. Martin; Directed by Stuart Gillard; airdate: March 26, 1995.
2. **“Valerie 23”** Written by Jonathan Glassner; Directed by Timothy Bond; airdate: March 31, 1995.
3. **“Blood Brothers”** Written by Brad Wright; Directed by Tibor Takacs; airdate: April 7, 1995.
4. **“The Second Soul”** Written by Alan Brennert; Directed by Paul Lynch; airdate: April 14, 1995.
5. **“White Light Fever”** Written by David Kemper; Directed by Tibor Takacs; airdate: April 21, 1995.

6. **“The Choice”** Written by Ann Lewis Hamilton; Directed by Mark Sobel; airdate: April 28, 1995.
7. **“Virtual Future”** Written by Shawn Alex Thompson; Directed by Joseph L. Scanlon; airdate: May 7, 1995.
8. **“Living Hell”** Written by Pen Densham and Melinda Snodgrass; Directed by Graeme Campbell; airdate: May 14, 1995.
9. **“Corner of the Eye”** Written by David Schow; Directed by Stuart Gillard; airdate: May 21, 1995.
10. **“Under the Bed”** Written by Lawrence Meyers; Directed by Rene Bonniere; airdate: May 28, 1995.
11. **“Dark Matters”** Written by Alan Brennert; Directed by Paul Lynch; airdate: June 2, 1995.
12. **“The Conversion”** Written by Brad Wright; Story by Richard B. Lewis; Directed by Rebecca De Mornay; airdate: June 9, 1995.
13. **“Quality of Mercy”** Written by Brad Wright; Directed by Brad Turner; airdate: June 16, 1995.
14. **“The New Breed”** Written by Grant Rosenberg; Directed by Mario Azzopardi; airdate: June 23, 1995.
15. **“The Voyage Home”** Written by Grant Rosenberg; Directed by Tibor Takacs; airdate: June 30, 1995.
16. **“Caught in the Act”** Written by Rob Forsyth; Directed by Mark Sobel; airdate: July 1, 1995.
17. **“The Message”** Written by Brad Wright; Directed by Joseph L. Scanlon; airdate: July 16, 1995.
18. **“I, Robot”** Written by Alison Bingeman; Story by Otto Binder; Directed by Adam Nimoy; airdate: July 23, 1995.
19. **“If These Walls Could Talk”** Written by Manny Coto; Directed by Tibor Takacs; airdate: July 30, 1995.
20. **“Birthright”** Written by Michael Berlin and Eric Estrin; Directed by William Fruet; airdate: August 13, 1995.
21. **“Voice of Reason”** Written by Brad Wright; Directed by Neill Fearnley; airdate: August 20, 1995.
- *Second Season (1996)*
22. **“A Stitch in Time”** Written by Steven Barnes; Directed by Mario Azzopardi; airdate: January 14, 1996.
23. **“Resurrection”** Written by Chris Brancato; Directed by Mario Azzopardi; airdate: January 14, 1996.
24. **“Unnatural Selection”** Written by Eric A. Morris; Directed by Joseph L. Scanlon; airdate:

January 19, 1996.

25. **“I Hear You Calling”** Written by Scott Shepherd; Story by Catherine Weber; Directed by Mario Azzopardi; airdate: January 26, 1996.

26. **“Mind Over Matter”** Written by Jon Cooksey and Ali Marie Matheson; Directed by Brad Turner; airdate: February 2, 1996.

27. **“Beyond the Veil”** Written by Chris Brancato; Directed by Allan Eastman; airdate: February 9, 1996.

28. **“First Anniversary”** Written by Jon Cooksey and Ali Marie Matheson; Story by Richard Matheson; Directed by Brad Turner; airdate: February 16, 1996.

29. **“Straight and Narrow”** Written by Joel Metzger; Directed by Joseph L. Scanlon; airdate: February 23, 1996.

30. **“Trial by Fire”** Written by Brad Wright; Directed by Jonathan Glassner; airdate: March 1, 1996.

31. **“Worlds Apart”** Written by Chris Dickie; Directed by Brad Turner; airdate: March 22, 1996.

32. **“The Refuge”** Written by Alan Brennert; Directed by Ken Girotti; airdate: April 5, 1996.

33. **“Inconstant Moon”** Written by Brad Wright; Story by Larry Niven; Directed by Joseph L. Scanlon; airdate: April 12, 1996.

34. **“From Within”** Written by Jonathan Glassner; Directed by Neill Fearnley; airdate: April 28, 1996.

35. **“The Heist”** Written by Steven Barnes; Directed by Brad Turner; airdate: May 5, 1996.

36. **“Afterlife”** Written by John Whelpley; Directed by Mario Azzopardi; airdate: May 19, 1996.

37. **“The Deprogrammers”** Written by James Crocker; Directed by Joseph L. Scanlon; airdate: May 26, 1996.

38. **“Paradise”** Written by Jonathan Walker and Chris Dickie; Directed by Mario Azzopardi; airdate: June 16, 1996.

39. **“The Light Brigade”** Written by Brad Wright; Directed by Michael Keusch; airdate: June 23, 1996.

40. **“Falling Star”** Written by Michael Bryant; Directed by Ken Girotti; airdate: June 30, 1996.

41. **“Out of Body”** Written by James Crocker; Directed by Mario Azzopardi; airdate: July 14, 1996.

42. **“Vanishing Act”** Written and directed by Jonathan Glassner; airdate: July 21, 1996.

43. **“The Sentence”** Written by Melissa Rosenberg; Directed by Joseph L. Scanlon; airdate: August 4,

1996.

• *Third Season (1997)*

**44. “Second Thoughts”** Written by Sam Egan; Directed by Mario Azzopardi; airdate: January 19, 1997.

**45. “Re-Generation”** Written by Tom Astle; Directed by Brenton Spencer; airdate: January 19, 1997.

**46. “Last Supper”** Written by Scott Shepherd; Directed by Helen Shaver; airdate: January 24, 1997.

**47. “Stream of Consciousness”** Written by David Shore; Directed by Joe Nimziki; airdate: January 31, 1997.

**48. “Dark Rain”** Written by David Braff; Directed by Mario Azzopardi; airdate: February 7, 1997.

**49. “The Camp”** Written by Brad Wright; Directed by Jonathan Glassner; airdate: February 14, 1997.

**50. “Heart’s Desire”** Written by Alan Brennert; Directed by Mario Azzopardi; airdate: February 21, 1997.

**51. “Tempests”** Written by Hart Hanson; Directed by Mario Azzopardi; airdate: February 28, 1997.

**52. “The Awakening”** Written by James Crocker; Directed by George Bloomfield; airdate: March 7, 1997.

**53. “New Lease”** Written by Sam Egan; Directed by Jason Priestley; airdate: March 14, 1997.

**54. “Double Helix”** Written by Jonathan Glassner; Directed by Mario Azzopardi; airdate: March 21, 1997.

**55. “Dead Man’s Switch”** Written by Ben Richardson; Directed by Jeff Woolnough; airdate: March 28, 1997.

**56. “Music of the Spheres”** Written by Steven Barnes; Directed by David Warry-Smith; airdate: April 4, 1997.

**57. “The Revelations of Becky Paulson”** Written by Brad Wright; Story by Stephen King; Directed by Steven Weber; airdate: May 9, 1997.

**58. “Bodies of Evidence”** Written by Chris Dickie; Directed by Melvin Van Peebles; airdate: June 6, 1997.

**59. “A Special Edition”** Written by Naren Shankar and Jonathan Glassner; airdate: Mario Azzopardi; airdate: June 20, 1997.

**60. “Hearts and Minds”** Written by Naren Shankar; Directed by Brad Turner; airdate: July 11, 1997.

**61. “In Another Life”** Written by Naren Shanker; Directed by Allan Eastman; airdate: July 25, 1997.

62. **“Criminal Nature”** Written by Brad Markowitz; Directed by Steve Anker; airdate: January 23, 1998.
63. **“The Hunt”** Written by Sam Egan; Directed by Mario Azzopardi; airdate: January 30, 1998.
64. **“In the Zone”** Written by Naren Shankar; Story by Jon Povill; Directed by David Warry-Smith; airdate: February 6, 1998.
65. **“Rite of Passage”** Written by Chris Dickie; Directed by Jimmy Kaufman; airdate: February 16, 1998.
66. **“Relativity Theory”** Written by Carleton Eastlake; Directed by Ken Girotti; February 23, 1998.
67. **“Josh”** Written by Chris Ruppenthal; Directed by Jorge Montesi; airdate: March 6, 1998.
68. **“Glyphic”** Written by Naren Shankar; Directed by Catherine O’Hara; airdate: March 20, 1998.
69. **“Identity Crisis”** Written by James Crocker; Directed by Brad Turner; airdate: March 27, 1998.
70. **“The Vaccine”** Written by Brad Wright; Directed by Neill Fearnley; airdate: April 3, 1998.
71. **“Fear Itself”** Written by Sam Egan; Directed by James Head; airdate: April 10, 1998.
72. **“The Joining”** Written by Sam Egan; Directed by Brad Turner; airdate: April 17, 1998.
73. **“To Tell the Truth”** Written by Lawrence Myers; Directed by Mario Azzopardi; airdate: April 24, 1998.
74. **“Mary 25”** Written by Jonathan Glassner; Directed by James Head; airdate: May 29, 1998.
75. **“Final Exam”** Written by Carleton Eastlake; Directed by Mario Azzopardi; airdate: June 26, 1998.
76. **“Lithia”** Written by Sam Egan; Directed by Helen Shaver; airdate: July 3, 1998.
77. **“Monster”** Written by Chris Ruppenthal; Directed by Allan Eastman; airdate: July 10, 1998.
78. **“Sarcophagus”** Written by Bill Froehlich; Directed by Jeff Woolnough; airdate: August 5, 1998.
79. **“Nightmare”** Written by Sam Egan; Story by Joseph Stefano; Directed by James Head; airdate: August 12, 1998.
80. **“Promised Land”** Written by Brad Markowitz; Directed by Neill Fearnley; airdate: August 18, 1998.
81. **“Origin of the Species”** Written by Naren Shankar; Directed by Brad Turner; airdate: August 26, 1998.

82. **“The Balance of Nature”** Written by Derek Lowe; Directed by Steve Johnson; airdate: September 2, 1998.
83. **“Phobos Rising”** Written by Garth Wilson; Directed by Helen Shaver; airdate: October 26, 1998.
84. **“Black Box”** Written by Brad Markowitz; Directed by Steven Weber; airdate: May 10, 1999.
85. **“In Our Own Image”** Written by Naren Shankar, Carleton Eastlake, Chris Ruppenthal, Brad Markowitz; Directed by Steve Anker; airdate: May 17, 1999.

#### 4. **THE RAY BRADBURY THEATER (1985–1992)**

By 1985, the anthology wars were in full swing. *Amazing Stories*, *Alfred Hitchcock Presents*, *The Twilight Zone*, *Tales from the Darkside*, and *The Hitchhiker* were locked in fierce battle for a slice of the ratings pie. HBO, the premium cable network which had received some nice buzz, as well as numbers victories, with the sex and horror mix of *The Hitchhiker*, envisioned a more highbrow anthology as their second gambit. The channel’s tactic this time around was to hire one of the world’s most famous and talented genre authors and give him his own anthology series. In this case, Ray Bradbury became the star and host, and *The Ray Bradbury Theater* became HBO’s latest soldier in the anthology fracas. Three episodes aired in the summer of 1985, and drew critical raves. William Shatner starred in “The Playground,” Nick Mancuso starred in “The Crowd,” and Leslie Nielsen starred in “Marionettes, Inc.” Well-cast, sumptuously shot, and well-written, *The Ray Bradbury Theater* looked destined for a long HBO run. However, by 1986 the anthology wars were all but over, and the final tally was miserable: there had been no winners, only victims. *Alfred Hitchcock Presents* was canceled and both the new *Twilight Zone* and Steven Spielberg’s *Amazing Stories*, were low rated ... barely surviving to second seasons. HBO decided it was time to bow out of the battle, and *The Ray Bradbury Theater* became a casualty. Its second season of three episodes (which included “The Town Where No One Got Off” with Jeff Goldblum, “The Screaming Woman” with Drew Barrymore” and “Banshee” with Peter O’Toole) was aired, or dumped, into a ninety-minute special rather than run in individual time slots on different nights. Although the second series was just as well received (*Cinefantastique* quickly labeled the show the best “fantasy anthology series on TV”), the show was canceled.

Fate intervened for Mr. Bradbury and his series when the USA Network, a basic cable station, bought the rights to the series in 1988 (as it had done with *Alfred Hitchcock Presents* and *The Hitchhiker*) and renewed it for twelve episodes. So successful was this sortie that *The Ray Bradbury Theater* ran three more seasons (two seasons of twelve episodes; one season of twenty-four episodes). In the end, there were sixty-five episodes to the series credit, which made it a perfect bet for syndication. Not surprisingly, USA then quickly shipped the series over to its network companion, the Sci-Fi Channel, and reruns of the show soon commenced.

*The Ray Bradbury Theater*, alas, suffered from low budgets and poor production values. Though Bradbury himself made for an amiable host and his stories were genuinely interesting, he was not well-served by a production company which shot in New Zealand, Canada, and France—any locale where labor was cheap—and the series was consequently filled with undistinguished casts and minimalist, low-budget sets. *The Ray Bradbury Theater*, USA version, is indistinguishable from *The Hitchhiker* or *Alfred Hitchcock Presents* (USA versions) and is thus a lesser light in the fierce



anthology competition.

## 5. NIGHTMARE CLASSICS (1989)

Shelley Duvall's (*The Shining* [1980]) *Fairie Tale Theater* had become one of the biggest hits on the Showtime network in the late '80s. A sweet and often amusing series aimed primarily at children, *Fairie Tale Theater*, produced by Think Entertainment, had become a popular place for Hollywood celebrities to drop in and do a crazy, high-profile guest role (à la *Batman* [1966-69]). The success of this series (and her second series *Tall Tales and Legends*), inspired Duvall to tackle the realm of literary horror. What she came up with the third time around was *Nightmare Classics*, a short-run (four episodes) anthology which adapted famous gothic novels and stories from the last two centuries. Linda Hunt introduced each show, quoting from Edgar Allan Poe, and prominent genre writers were brought in to adapt stories.

J. Michael Straczynski adapted Robert Louis Stevenson's "The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde," Art Wallace, a writer on *Star Trek* and *Dark Shadows*, adapted "The Eyes of the Panther" by Ambrose Pierce, and the remaining two stories came from Henry James ("The Turn of the Screw") and Joseph Sheridan Le Fanu ("Carmilla"). The show was impeccably cast, with Roddy McDowall, Amy Irving, Meg Tilly, Roy Dotrice, Laura Dern, and Daphne Zuniga all turning up. *Nightmare Classics* aired from late-summer 1989 to November of the same year, and quietly disappeared after its quartet of shows.

## 6. WELCOME TO PARADOX(1998)

This 1998 genre anthology ran on the Sci-Fi Channel for thirteen episodes, approximately half-a-season. It aired Monday nights at 10:00 P.M. in the fall of 1998, and was the equivalent of that old "be careful what you wish for" horror trope exploited so successfully in several old *Twilight Zone* episodes and more recently in the *Wishmaster* film series. Each story in this anthology featured a character who *wished* for something, only to have the results of that desire turn out to be less-than-wonderful. What made this series unusual and noteworthy, however, was its setting. Every episode of *Welcome to Paradox* was part of a futuristic anthology set in the incredible metropolis of Betaville, a "utopian," technology-ridden city of the distant future. Thus the series was horrific in its view of the future, with rampant technology being the villain of the show, week-in and week-out. Filmed in Vancouver (again!), the series was produced by Lewis Chesler (of *The Hitchhiker*) and the host was a character called "Paradox." Stories were adapted from Alan Dean Foster, and guest stars included Ice Tea and Rodney Rowland, the latter of *Space: Above and Beyond*.

Though *Welcome to Paradox* was set in the future and concerned with technology, thus science fiction, an argument might also be made that it was horrific in intention since it preached the dangers of technology and usually had a moralistic, O'Henry-style ending. Each week, a specific question (of technology) was asked on *Welcome to Paradox*? What if you couldn't feel pain? What would prisons of the future be like? What if you wouldn't grow old? What if you could have a perfect body? The answers to these questions were frequently thought-provoking, and more than a little bit disturbing.

Though the show was generally well received, and Patrick Lee of *Sci Fi Weekly* on the Internet noted that "the storylines were intriguing and the acting ... was on a uniformly high level," the show did not

survive for a second season, as the Sci-Fi Channel went a different way with its new prime time block called "Sci-Fi Prime."

## **“Man-on-the-Run” Series**

### **1. DEAD AT 21 (1994)**

#### **CRITICAL RECEPTION**

“a fast-paced, lively and colorful political/scientific atmosphere created of video quick cuts, and rock music rhythms and refrains ... Dumb as it is ... this show has an edge worth traveling along ... rooted in a deep, emotionally powerful sense of skepticism and rebelliousness ... it is technologically, culturally, and stylistically hip.”—Elayne Rapping, *The Progressive*: “Cult TV with a Twist,” January 1995, pages 34-36.

“heads straight for rampant paranoia, skillfully escalating a general uneasiness into full-fledged terror ... The special effects used for Ed’s freakish dreams are fairly standard issue, lots of spinning cameras and strobe lights. But with some driving music and sharp directorial pacing, *Dead at 21* gives its universe of seeming conspiracy a solidly menacing spin. The performances of Mr. Noseworthy ... and Ms. Ryan are appealingly attuned to the youthful angst of Ed and Maria ... summer’s first real television blast.”—John J. O’Connor, *The New York Times*: “One Year to Disarm a Killer in the Brain,” June 15, 1994, C16.

#### **CAST AND CREDITS**

*Cast*: Jack Noseworthy (Edward Bellamy); Lisa Dean Ryan (Maria Cavalos); Whip Hubley (Winston).

*Credits*: *Associate Producers*: John A. Jacobson, Bruce A. Taylor. *Supervising Producer*: P.K. Simonds. *Producer*: Steve Ecclesine. *Executive Producer*: Roderick Taylor. *Executive in Charge of Production*: Tom Campbell. An MTV Production in association with Qwerty Inc.

#### **THE DETAILS**

Call this short-lived series *The Fugitive* meets *A Rebel Without a Cause*. Motorcycle riding slacker Edward Bellamy (Jack Noseworthy of *Event Horizon* [1997]) discovers on the eve of his 20th birthday that he is actually a failed government experiment and worse ... that he has a built-in expiration date. A computer chip in his brain will kill him at the age of 21, in exactly one year, unless he finds his “creator,” Dr. Heisenberg, and receives some kind of medical treatment. Edward has also been framed for a crime he did not commit: the murder of a man who shared “the truth” with him. Along for the ride on Edward’s cross-country search for his real identity is the beautiful Maria. Winston is the “Hapless Pursuer,” in this case, the government agent bent on catching his prey.

*Dead at 21* was a youth-oriented (but not child’s) series which aired on MTV, the popular music cable station, during the summer of 1994. MTV’s first continuing “adventure” series (*The Real World* doesn’t count!), the show ran for thirteen half-hour long episodes, and has never been rerun.

#### **EPISODE LIST**

**1. “Pilot”** Written by John Sherman; Directed by Ralph Hemecker; airdates: June 15, 1994.

2. **“Brain Salad”** Written by Roderick L. Taylor and Bruce A Taylor; Directed by Ralph Hemecker; airdate: June 22, 1994.
3. **“Love Minus Zero”** Written by P.K. Simonds; Directed by Charles Winker; airdate: June 29, 1994.
4. **“Shock the Monkey”** Written by Roderick L. Taylor and Bruce A. Taylor; Directed by Ralph Hemecker; airdate: July 6, 1994.
5. **“Gone Daddy Gone”** Written by Manny Coto; Directed by Kari Skogland; airdate: July 13, 1994.
6. **“Use Your Illusion”** Written by Manny Coto; Directed by Ron Oliver; airdate: July 20, 1994.
7. **“Live for Today”** Written by Jon Sherman; Directed by Mark Jean; airdate: July 27, 1994.
8. **“Tie Your Mother Down”** Written by Jon Sherman; Directed by Jeff Kibbee; airdate: August 3, 1994.
9. **“Cry Baby Cry”** Written by Manny Coto; Directed by Terence O’Hara; airdate: August 10, 1994.
10. **“Life During Wartime”** Written by Manny Coto; Directed by Jeff Kibbee; airdate: August 17, 1994.
11. **“Hotel California”** Written by Roderick L. Taylor and Bruce A. Taylor; Directed by Ralph Hemecker; airdate: August 24, 1994.
12. **“In Through the Out Door” (Part I)** Written by Roderick L. Taylor and Bruce A. Taylor; Directed by Ralph Hemecker; airdate: August 31, 1994.
13. **“In Through the Out Door” (Part II)** Written by Roderick L. Taylor and Bruce A. Taylor; Directed by Ralph Hemecker; airdate: September 7, 1994.

## 2. *NOWHERE MAN* (1995-1996)

### CRITICAL RECEPTION

“This type of paranoid scenario (predecessors include *The Prisoner* and ... VR.5) is hard to sustain as a series without either sharp focus or boundless imagination. And *Nowhere Man*, an intriguing if thin show, isn’t sufficiently flush in either category.”—David Hiltbrand, *People*, August 28, 1995, page 14.

“With a solid lead in Greenwood and spooky direction from *Poltergeist*’s Tobe Hooper, *Nowhere* could go somewhere.”—*Entertainment Weekly*, August 25, 1995, page 98.

“the best paranoia trip TV has seen in years ... a passionate defense of the individual in the face of overwhelming odds.”—Roger Fulton, and John Betancourt, *The Sci-Fi Channel Encyclopedia of TV Science Fiction*, Warner Books, New York, New York, 1997, page 304.

### CAST AND CREDITS

*Cast:* Bruce Greenwood (Thomas Veil).

*Credits: Creator:* Lawrence Hertzog. *Executive Producer:* Lawrence Hertzog. *Producer:* Peter Dunne. *Supervising Producer:* Joel Surnow. Filmed on location in Portland, Oregon. Created by Lawrence Hertzog Productions, in association with Touchstone Television.

## THE DETAILS

The incredible success of *The X-Files* on Fox was an example for UPN when it greenlighted production on Lawrence Hertzog's series, *Nowhere Man*. Interestingly, *Nowhere Man* did not concern itself with aliens, monsters, or the like, only with one popular *X-Files* element: a vast conspiracy. In this case, the story involved photographer Thomas Veil (Bruce Greenwood, later of *Sleepwalkers* [1997]), and his photo "Hidden Agenda." The picture was perfectly named, for some powerful force with a hidden agenda did not like the picture, and wanted it destroyed. To do so, the agents of the conspiracy set about to "erase" the photographer, Veil, from the face of the world. Thus, in one night, Veil's whole identity was taken away. His wife (*Millennium*'s Megan Gallagher) claimed she no longer recognized or knew him, and all of his contacts with the world were removed, taken away with miraculous speed and ease. With a copy of "Hidden Agenda," Veil then set out across the United States to expose the conspiracy and discover the truth about "Hidden Agenda" and his own identity.

A "man-on-the-run" series with similarities to the formats of *The Fugitive*, *The Phoenix*, *The Immortal*, *The Incredible Hulk*, and *Starman*, *Nowhere Man* was also similar to the late-60s Patrick McGoohan production, *The Prisoner*. In this case, the lead character was not trapped in a bizarre village, but a global village: the world. No matter where he ran, Veil could not seem to get to the truth and discover what had happened to his life, his very history. This exciting, paranoid premise made *Nowhere Man* one of the most involving and high-profile shows of the 1995-96 season. Airing on Monday nights after *Star Trek Voyager*'s first year, the show quickly generated an enormous (and still active) fan following. Tobe Hooper directed several episodes of the series, and the guest list was impressive, with Michael Tucker, Carrie-Anne Moss (of *The Matrix* [1999]), Raphael Sbarge, Dean Stockwell, Dwight Schultz, and Hal Linden taking part in the massive "cover-up." Veil's one season odyssey took him from a mental hospital to a "village" set up by the conspiracy, and the final episode brought all these elements to a stunning conclusion, which will not be revealed here.

*Nowhere Man* was canceled after one season, and UPN offered the dreadful *The Burning Zone* in its stead. *Nowhere Man* would seem a prime candidate for the Sci-Fi Channel to pick up as part of its "Conspiracy Sunday," but so far the channel has resisted such an idea. Sadly, *Nowhere Man* has not been rerun since its original network airing, almost five years ago.

## EPISODE LIST

1. **"Absolute Zero"** Written by Lawrence Hertzog; Directed by Tobe Hooper; airdate: August 28, 1995.
2. **"Turnabout"** Written by Lawrence Hertzog; Directed by Tobe Hooper; airdate: September 4, 1995.
3. **"The Incredible Derek"** Written by Joel Surnow; Directed by James Darren; airdate: September 11, 1995.

4. **“Something About Her”** Written by Lawrence Hertzog; Directed by James Whitmore Jr.; airdate: September 18, 1995.
5. **“Paradise on Your Doorstep”** Written by Lawrence Hertzog; Directed by Thomas J. Wright; airdate: September 25, 1995.
6. **“The Spider Webb”** Written by Joel Surnow; Directed by Thomas Wright; airdate: October 9, 1995.
7. **“A Rough Whimper of Insanity”** Written by Joel Surnow; Directed by Guy Magar; airdate: October 23, 1995.
8. **“The Alpha Strike”** Written by Erica Byrne; Directed by Steven Robman; airdate: October 30, 1995.
9. **“You Really Got a Hold on Me”** Written by Jake and Mike Weinberger; Directed by Michael Levine; airdate: November 6, 1995.
10. **“Father”** Written by Art Montarestelli; Directed by Guy Magar; airdate: November 13, 1995.
11. **“The Enemy Within”** Written by Peter Dunne; Director Ian Toynton; airdate: November 20, 1995.
12. **“It’s Not Such a Wonderful Life”** Written by Lawrence Hertzog; Directed by Tim Hunter; airdate: November 27, 1995.
13. **“Contact”** Written by Lawrence Hertzog; Directed by Reza Badiyi; airdate: January 15, 1996.
14. **“Heart of Darkness”** Written by David Ehrman; Directed by Stephen Stafford; airdate: January 22, 1996.
15. **“Forever Jung”** Written by Joel Surnow; Directed by Stephen Stafford; airdate: February 5, 1996.
16. **“Shine a Light on You”** Written by Art Montarestelli; Directed by Stephen Stafford; airdate: February 12, 1996.
17. **“Stay Tuned”** Written by Lawrence Hertzog; Directed by Mel Damski; airdate: February 19, 1996.
18. **“Hidden Agenda”** Written by David Ehrman; Directed by Michael Levine; airdate: February 26, 1996.
19. **“Doppelganger”** Written by Schulyer Kent; Directed by Ian Toynton; airdate: March 18, 1996.
20. **“Through a Lens Darkly”** Written by Art Montarestelli; Directed by Ian Toynton; airdate: April 8, 1996.
21. **“The Dark Side of the Moon”** Written by David Ehrman; Directed by James Whitmore Jr.; airdate: April 15, 1996.

22. **“Calaway”** Written by Joel Surnow; Directed by Ian Toynton; airdate: April 29, 1996.

23. **“Zero Minus Ten”** Written by Jane Espenson; Directed by James Whitmore Jr.; airdate: May 6, 1996.

24. **“Marathon”** Written by Art Montarestelli; Directed by Stephen Stafford; airdate: May 13, 1996.

25. **“Gemini”** Written by Lawrence Hertzog and Art Monterastelli; Directed by Steven Stafford; airdate: May 20, 1996.

# ***Horror Lite***

## **1. TUCKER'S WITCH (1982-1983)**

### **CRITICAL RECEPTION**

“Mix a little bit of *Mr. and Mrs. North* with a dash of *Bewitched* and you know what *Tucker's Witch* was like.”—Tim Brooks and Earle Marsh, *The Complete Directory of Prime Time Network TV Shows, 1946-Present*, page 869.

“A wonderful show that never caught on with viewers. The cast is witty and delightful ... Unfortunately, because of the few episodes made the series has never re-aired in syndication, although it has aired overseas.”—William E. Anchors, *Epilog* #17, April 1992, page 69.

### **CAST AND CREDITS**

*Cast:* Catherine Hicks (Amanda Tucker); Tim Matheson (Rick Tucker); Barbara Barrie (Ellen/“Mom”); Alfre Woodard (Marsha Fullbright); Bill Morey (Lieutenant Fisk).

*Credits: Executive Producers:* Leonard Hill, Phil Mandelker, Steve Kline. *Created by:* Bill Bast. *Music:* Brad Fiedel. *Writers:* Bill Bast and Paul Huson.

### **THE DETAILS**

In fall of 1982, CBS fostered high hopes for *Tucker's Witch*, a romantic detective drama which was to include an element of the supernatural (which thus qualifies the series for mention in this text). In particular, the protagonist of *Tucker's Witch*, Amanda Tucker, was a witch with special “powers” that sometimes worked and sometimes ... did not. Assisting Amanda in the development of her unusual powers was the family cat, a “familiar” named Dickens who was once described as a “furry crystal ball through which Amanda receives her psychic fixes.”<sup>6</sup> The series was also romantic comedy in conception, with Amanda and Rick's detective skills at the Tucker Agency frequently clashing (his powers were deductive; hers psychic). *Tucker's Witch* was also a traditional crime series in that the villains were *not* supernatural, but mortal, as opposed to *Charmed*, wherein the villains are all demons and the like. Additionally, and a bit tediously, the show might also be described as a family drama because Amanda's mother Ellen was featured frequently and scenes often took place at the Tucker homestead.

Unfortunately, many elements in *Tucker's Witch* seemed confusing or ill-considered. Although a cat is often the companion of a witch in mythology and occult texts, Amanda's powers seemed more paranormal than occult-based. Amanda acted more like a psychic than a wiccan, and the series did not seem to understand the difference.

One of only six new series on CBS's schedule for the '82-'83 season, *Tucker's Witch* faced its share of problems. Early on, the original cast (Kim Cattrall as Amanda Tucker; Art Hindle as Rick Tucker) was replaced by Catherine Hicks (*Star Trek IV: The Voyage Home* [1986]; *Child's Play* [1988], *7th Heaven* [1996– ]) and Tim Matheson. Also notable in the cast (as the detective agency Girl Friday) was a young Alfre Woodard, one of today's truly great actresses, seen recently in *Star Trek: First Contact*



(1996).

When *Tucker's Witch* aired during its regular Wednesday night time slot at 10:00 P.M., the show followed a weak lead-in (a sitcom called *Filthy Rich* [1982-83] starring Dixie Carter and Delta Burke) and faced competition from powerhouses such as *Dynasty* (1981-88) and even the '82 World Series. Ratings were low, the show had creative problems, and CBS pulled the show from the air after just six episodes were broadcast. In March of 1983, CBS aired the last six episodes of *Tucker's Witch* on Thursday nights but by then the verdict was in and the show was officially canceled. In an interview with *The New York Times*, producer Len Hill explained why he felt that this witches' brew of romance/comedy/crime/supernatural failed to grab an audience:

The mysteries were too fragile and not well enough thought out ... Our story ideas were too conventional. We relied too often on convenience to catch the killer and we didn't maximize the unique aspects of the relationship between our lead characters.<sup>2</sup>

Guest stars on *Tucker's Witch* included Ted Danson, Marj Dusay, Kenneth Mars, Liz Torres, Tracy Scoggins, and Simon Oakland. Though *Tucker's Witch* did not live long (and has never been rerun in syndication because it produced so few episodes), it did form a critical link in the "witch" chain from *Bewitched* to *Charmed* (1998– ) and *Sabrina the Teenage Witch* (1996–), specifically in highlighting the activities of a beautiful witch and a cat.

## EPISODE LIST

1. **"The Good Witch of Laurel Canyon"** Written by Bill Bast and Paul Huson; Directed by Peter Hunt; airdate: October 6, 1982.
2. **"Big Mouth"** Written by Bill Bast and Paul Huson; Directed by Rod Daniel; airdate: October 13, 1982.
3. **"The Corpse Who Knew Too Much"** Written by Steve Kline; Directed by Harry Winer; airdate: October 20, 1982.
4. **"The Case of the Toltec Death Mask"** Written by Maryanne Kasica and Michael Scheff; Directed by Harry Winer; airdate: October 27, 1982.
5. **"Terminal Case"** Written by Lee Sheldon; Directed by Randa Haines; airdate: November 3, 1982.
6. **"Abra Cadaver"** Written by Bernie Kukoff; Directed by Rod Daniel; airdate: November 10, 1982.
7. **"Dye Job"** Written by Marc Rubin; Directed by Harvey Laidman; airdate: March 31, 1983.
8. **"Psych Out"** Written by Steve Kline; Directed by Peter Hunt; airdate: April 7, 1983.
9. **"Rock Is a Hard Place"** Written by Lee Sheldon; Directed by Corey Allen; airdate: April 14, 1983.
10. **"Formula for Revenge"** Written by Bill Bast and Paul Huson; Directed by Harvey Laidman; airdate: April 28, 1983.
11. **"Living and Presumed Dead"** Written by Steve Kline; Directed by Corey Allen; airdate: May 5,

1983.

**12. “Murder Is the Key”** Written by Bernie Kukoff; Directed by Victor Lobl; airdate: May 26, 1983.

## 2. *SHADOW CHASERS* (1985–1986)

### CAST AND CREDITS

*Cast:* Trevor Eve (Professor Jonathan MacKensie); Dennis Dugan (Edgar “Benny” Benedek); Nina Foch (Dr. Julianne Moorhouse).

*Credits: Executive Producers:* Brian Grazer, Kenneth Johnson. *Created by:* Brian Grazer, Kenneth Johnson. *Music:* Joe Harnell, Marc Tanner.

### THE DETAILS

Billed as a “comedic adventure into the strange and unexplained,” *Shadow Chasers* might best be described as an early, funny version of *The X-Files*. Created by Brian Grazer and Kenneth Johnson, the mastermind behind *Alien Nation* (1988) as well as *Cliffhangers* (1979), the series has also been labeled “a fantasy/comedy,” a moniker which does not explain its placement in a book about terror TV. Specifically, *Shadow Chasers* is included here because it manages to feature (albeit in comedic fashion) a variety of horror tropes including cults (“The Spirit of St. Louis”), the Bermuda Triangle (“The Middle of Somewhere”), ghosts (“Amazing Grace,” “Phantom of the Galleria”), zombies (“Parts Unknown”), and even deals with the devil (“Let’s Make a Deal”). Some sources have also described *Shadow Chasers* as a variation on the popular 1984 hit feature film, *Ghostbusters*, and that seems pretty apt as well.

*Shadow Chasers*, again like the *X-Files*, features two partners investigating occult, paranormal happenings. In this case, however, the partners are not intrepid F.B.I. agents but a stumbling university professor (Eve) and an equally inept tabloid reporter (Dugan).

*Shadow Chasers* aired from November 14, 1985, to January 16, 1986. Like many genre shows over the years, this ABC show was scheduled against stiff competition. Because it aired on Thursday nights (from 8:00-9:00), the series was trounced by two of the biggest hits of the decade: *Magnum, P.I.* on CBS and the killer combo of *The Cosby Show* and *Family Ties* on NBC. Not surprisingly, *Shadow Chasers* only aired ten times before being canceled. It has been occasionally rerun on The Sci-Fi Channel as part of the “Series Collection,” alongside *She Wolf of London*, *Nightmare Cafe*, and the like.

### EPISODE LIST

**1. “Shadow Chasers” (2 hours)** Written by Kenneth Johnson and Brian Grazer; Directed by Kenneth Johnson; airdate: November 14, 1985.

**2. “Spirit of St. Louis”** Written by Craig Buck; Directed by Victor Lubl; airdate: November 21, 1985.

**3. “Amazing Grace”** Written by Susan Goldberg and Bob Rosenfarb; Directed by Barbara Peters; airdate: November 28, 1985.

4. **“The Middle of Somewhere”** Written by Renee and Harry Longstreet; Directed by Chuck Braverman; airdate: December 5, 1985.
5. **“Parts Unknown”** Written by Linda Campanelli and M.M. Shelly Moore; Directed by Bob Sweeny; airdate: December 12, 1985.
6. **“The Many Lives of Jonathan”** Written by Richard Manning and Hans Beimler; Directed by Cliff Bole; airdate: December 19, 1985.
7. **“The Phantom of the Galleria”** Written by Peggy Goldman; Directed by Alan Myerson; airdate: December 26, 1985.
8. **“How Green Was My Murder”** Written by Susan Goldberg and Bob Rosenfarb; Directed by Tony Mordente; airdate: January 9, 1986.
9. **“Let’s Make a Deal”** Written by Peggy Goldman; Directed by Barbara Peters; airdate: January 16, 1986.

### UNAIRED EPISODES

10. **“Ahead of Time”** Written by Renee and Harry Longstreet; Directed by Tony Mordente.
11. **“Blood and Magnolias”** Written by Maryanne Kasica and Michael Scheff; Directed by Chuck Bowman.
12. **“Cora’s Stranger”** Written by Diane Frolov; Directed by Alan Myerson.
13. **“Curse of the Full Moon”** Written by Maryanne Kasica and Michael Scheff; Directed by Bob Sweeney.

### 3. *THE MUNSTERS TODAY* (1988–1991)

#### THE DETAILS

*The Munsters* (1964-66) was a short-lived, black-and-white CBS sitcom about a family of suburban ghouls who happened to look just like the famous monsters of Universal Studios during the 1940s. Father Herman Munster (Fred Gwynne) was the Frankenstein Munster, Grandpa (Al Lewis) was a caped vampire, Lily (Yvonne De Carlo) was the bride of Frankenstein, and little Eddie Munster (Butch Patrick) was a werewolf with pointed ears and a widow’s peak. The Munsters lived in a big old gothic mansion (at 1313 Mockingbird Lane) with normal daughter Marilyn (first Beverly Owen, then Pat Priest) and their pet dragon, Spot, for two seasons. The show was initially conceived as an *Addams Family* (1964-66) rip off, but it soon achieved everlasting fame after extensive syndicated reruns in the early and mid-1970s. Today *The Munsters* is one of those perennial “rerun” comedies, like *I Love Lucy*, *The Brady Bunch*, or *Gilligan’s Island*. Everybody remembers it, everybody loves it. In 1992, *The Ben Stiller Show* even acknowledged the show’s popularity with a take-off/homage of *The Munsters* called *Cape Munster*. It featured a grown Eddie Munster fulfilling the Robert De Niro role of *Cape Fear* (1991).

In 1988, the Arthur Company took a stab at reviving *The Munsters* legend with a sitcom remake entitled *The Munsters Today*. Sold to New York, Philadelphia, San Francisco, Detroit, Dallas, Washington, D.C., and other major American cities as part of the genre syndication glut of the late '80s (along with *Monsters*, *Friday the 13th: The Series*, *Freddy's Nightmares*, *War of the Worlds*, and *The Untouchables*), *The Munsters Today* featured an all-new cast in a color version of the series. The concept underlying the revamp was that the Munsters had been "asleep" for twenty-two years and had only just awakened to find themselves in the fast-and-furious late '80s and early '90s. The new cast included John Schuck as Herman Munster, former Miss America Lee Meriweather as Lily, Howard Morton (of *Gimme a Break* [1981-85]) as Grandpa, James Marsden as a still young Eddie, and a miraculously younger version of Marilyn than had been seen before (this time played by Hilary Van Dyke). Actor John Schuck explained to *Starlog* his reasons for being involved in the *Munsters* remake:

... I thought that Herman Munster is an unusual creation, one I could do many wonderful things with ... I like the concept of a show that deals with a family unit. I also realized we were going to be much different from the first one, which was wonderful. Then, it proved to be a challenge: How can I create my own Herman?<sup>8</sup>

Schuck, who has done everything from *Star Trek* films (*The Voyage Home* [1986], *The Undiscovered Country* [1991]) to *Holmes and Yoyo* (1976) played a blue-skinned Herman to comedic effect, even when the basic sitcom stories failed to utilize his full potential as an actor.

*The Munsters Today* lasted for three seasons, seventy-two episodes in all, and in the process featured guest appearances by Jonathan Brandis (*SeaQuest DSV* [1993-95]), Robbie Rist (*Galactica: 1980* [1980]), Zsa Zsa Gabor, Dr. Joyce Brothers, Donny Most, and Ruth Buzzi. As a horror program, the show was inconsequential for all intents and purposes. Instead, *The Munsters Today* was merely a family-oriented situation comedy which utilized (some might say "exploited") horror icons (Dracula, Frankenstein, the Wolfman) as central character types. Some horrific aspects came into play in certain episodes, but always with funny rather than scary results. Demons appeared in "Genie from Hell" (with Billy Barty) and "Melting Pot," a Mummy friend showed up in "Green Eyed Monsters," and a would-be werewolf was highlighted in "Don't Cry Wolfman." The monster shtick, which was carried off with at least a degree of humor, if not sophistication, in the original series, seemed far more tired and old in this low budget remake, even though the new cast was arguably as good as the original one. *The Munsters Today* is included in this book because, way back in 1970, *Rod Serling's Night Gallery* also satirized famous movie monsters during Jack Laird's sometimes notorious "black-outs." Not surprisingly, *The Munsters Today* plays like extended versions of these *Night Gallery* shows, essentially a one-joke show that exists in the world of horror without being horrific (except in its lack of quality).

*The Munsters Today* is rarely rerun on the eve of the 21st century, perhaps because of its low production values. When most people think of *The Munsters*, they remember the black and white 1960s series rather than this rather forgettable, color remake.

#### **4. FREE SPIRIT (1989–1990)**

##### **THE DETAILS**

Before *Sabrina the Teenage Witch* (1996– ) and well after *Bewitched* (1964-67), there came this

forgettable entry in the witch-sitcom genre, *Free Spirit*. An ABC situation comedy which aired on Friday nights (the same night *Sabrina* would inherit six years later!), the series starred Corinne Bohrer as a witch *cum* housekeeper/nanny who was hired to care for the typically suburban Harper family. Her special powers often came into play to save the day or avert domestic disasters. This family “situation” was a format component which made *Free Spirit* resemble a *Who’s the Boss* or *The Nanny* variation as much as a supernatural-oriented comedy. One of Bohrer’s young wards eventually came into her own, however, in the late ’90s. Alyson Hannigan, who played Jessica or “Jessie” Harper on *Free Spirit*, became famous for playing Willow, a witch herself, on Joss Whedon’s *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*.

*Free Spirit* ran for just half-a-season (thirteen episodes) before being canceled by ABC. Because the series was a two-camera sitcom, technical and acting credits were mostly unmemorable, but Robert Reed and Florence Henderson of *The Brady Bunch* (1969-74) did reteam for one episode, and Michael Constantine (a Terror TV hall of famer for appearances on *Darkroom*, *Friday the 13th*, and *Night Gallery*) appeared in another.

## 5. SABRINA THE TEENAGE WITCH (1996– )

### CRITICAL RECEPTION

“strictly lighthearted froth rather than Stephen King-style horror ... the show’s genial loopiness harks back to *Bewitched*.”—Jill Gerston, *The New York Times*: “A ‘Normal Kid’ with Magical Properties,” October 6, 1996, page 18.

“there’s the fun of flying and turning people into poodles and doing all the other things that teenagers would like to do when stumbling and fumbling through an awkward age ... these characters are pleasantly odd, down to their curious conversations with a cat named Salem.”—John J. O’Connor, *The New York Times*: “The Latest Member of the Coven,” April 10, 1996, page C18.

### CAST AND CREDITS

*Cast*: Melissa Joan Hart (Sabrina); Beth Broderick (Aunt Zelda); Caroline Rhea (Aunt Hilda); Nate Richert (Harvey); Jenna Leigh Green (Libby); Michelle Beaudoin (Jenny); Paul Feig (Mr. Pool); Nick Bakay (Salem the Cat).

*Credits*: *Executive Producers*: Paula Hart, Barney Cohen, Kathryn Wallack. *Created by*: Nell Scovell. *Based on Characters in*: *Archie Comics*. *Producers*: Richard Davis and Alana H. Lambros. Produced by Viacom in association with HartBreak Productions.

### THE DETAILS

Perhaps the most popular “witch” sitcom ever, *Sabrina the Teenage Witch* has been delighting teen audiences since it first aired as a Showtime TV movie in April of 1996. The network series, starring the perky Melissa Joan Hart (*Clarissa Explains It All*), began airing the following October, and has been a mainstay of the ABC Friday prime time schedule ever since. It is credited (along with *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*) as creating a new generation of occult-oriented but nonetheless positive role models for young women. *Charmed*, for instance, is often described as *Sabrina* meets *Buffy*.

As older viewers may be aware, Sabrina is not a new character. This sixteen-year-old witch was one of the main characters in *Archie Comics* long before she came to TV and the so-called T.G.I.F. line-up. On TV, Sabrina is less sexy, and more innocent than her comic-book counterpart, but just as mischievous. There is not much new or exciting in this TV series, and not much horror to write about either, but the show still manages to generate some magic of its own through Hart's infectious and charming portrayal of a witch-in-training. As Hart has stated, the show is not intended to scare anyway, merely to amuse:

It's a fun show about a normal kid who just happens to be a witch ... We don't deal with heavy stuff like drugs and divorce or black magic and killing people. It's pure entertainment.<sup>9</sup>

Indeed, for all the "horror" included in this show, Sabrina might as well be Barbara Eden on *I Dream of Jeannie*. Although *Sabrina the Teenage Witch* is about a horror-type character (a witch with—again—a talking cat), it is pure sitcom. It is included here only because this author finds it fascinating that horror characters such as witches, ghouls, and vampires often turn up on TV played for laughs.

*Sabrina the Teenage Witch* has featured appearances by Frank Conniff (TV's Frank of *Mystery Science Theater 3000* [1989-99]), Robby Benson, Martin Mull, Kathy Ireland, Ed Begley Jr., Jack Wagner, and other notable stars, but it is for Hart's heart-filled performance that the show remains most special. Interestingly, Hart looks ready to shed her "teenage" image and in late 1999 posed for a series of very provocative photographs in the men's magazine, *Maxim*. What would Salem the cat think of that?

## 6. BAYWATCH NIGHTS (1996)

*Cast:* David Hasselhoff (Mitch Buchanon); Greg Alan Williams (Garner Ellerbee); Angie Harmon (Ryan McBride).

### THE DETAILS

Okay. You've got me. This is not a comedy, "horror lite" series at all. At least it is not supposed to be. Instead, this unintentionally hilarious spin-off from the popular *Baywatch* is a failed attempt to make a serious horror show in the vein of *The X-Files*. Airing in syndication, it lasted one short season, pitting surfer and lifeguard Mitch Buchanon (David Hasselhoff) against witches, cults, and UFOS. Its slogan was "nights will never be the same," and its intent was to show Buchanon's nocturnal life as an occult investigator, protecting the boardwalk and such from supernatural interlopers. As that description sounds, it is a fool's errand to merge the jiggle world of *Baywatch* with the paranormal, supernatural overtones of *The X-Files*, and this show manages to make a hash out of both premises. *Baywatch Nights* is executed with just enough naive stupidity to make it the campiest, funniest show to hit the airwaves in a long time. This must be the worst show to be inspired by *The X-Files*, even if it is really, really funny.

# ***Pseudo-Reality TV***

## **1. SIGHTINGS (1994–1997)**

### **CAST AND CREDITS**

*Cast:* Tim White (Host)

*Credits: Executive Producers:* Henry Winkler, Ann Daniel. *Correspondent:* Carla Wohl. *Co-Executive Producers:* Stephen Kroopnick. *Director:* George Cooke. *Supervising Producer:* Michaelle A. Davis. *Senior Segment Director:* Richard L. Schmidt. *Segment Producers:* Laura Aka, Craig Armstrong, Philip Davis, Joyce Goldstein, Ruth Rafidi, Rob Sharkey. *Head of Research and Development:* Lesley Taylor. *Researchers:* Candice Cephas-Diaz, Curt Collier, Michael Kriz, Matt Van Wagener. *Production Manager:* Lisa Blackwood. *Production Coordinator:* Chris Emhardt. *Post-production Supervisor:* Cole Metcalf. *Editors:* Mary Ann Benson, Paul Broz, Kelly Coskran, John Moore, Steven Uhlenberg, David Vernon. *Postproduction Audio:* Ron Miller, Craig Plachy. *Original Music:* Alan Ett. *Main Title Theme:* Bill Bodine. *Clip Clearance:* Gregory Fein, Kristi Dixon. *Online Producer:* Joe Fairbrother. *First PA:* Richard Brandt. *Production Assistant:* Derek McDaniel, Christopher Reidy, Trista Switzer. *Post Production:* Blake Grant, Alicia Jabin. *Wardrobe:* Brenda Maben. *Makeup:* Renee Napolitano. *Stage Manager:* Michael Malone. *Technical Director:* Jay Larkins. *Lighting Director:* James Moody. *Newsroom Designer:* Tim Saunders, Broadcast Design International. *From an original concept by:* Linda Moulton Howe. *Executive in Charge of Production:* Mark A. Vertullo. An Ann Daniel Production, Fair Dinkum Productions, from Paramount, a Viacom Company.

### **THE DETAILS**

On *Sightings*, host Tim White appears to stand, superimposed optically, before a vast control room where busy technicians in headsets and white collared shirts sit at advanced-looking terminals and stare at blinking maps in earnest, dramatic fashion. White's grave tone matches the tenor of the techies: he faces the audience solemnly and intones the series' motto: "No mystery is closed to an open mind."

All things being equal, this "reality" series probably has no legitimate place in a book about dramatic horror programming. After all, *Sightings* is not a drama program per se, but rather a poker-faced variation on the popular CBS reality show *Rescue 911* (hosted by the inimitable William Shatner). On *Sightings* (produced by the Fonz himself, Henry Winkler) several stories are recounted per episode, and each concerns some element of the paranormal. To lend credence to these supposedly true stories, so-called experts are interviewed in each twenty minute segment. Often, supernatural events such as hauntings are dramatized with cheap but effective special effects and creepy sounds. In essence a "reality" version of *The X-Files*, *Sightings* has probed nearly every kind of paranormal activity imaginable.

In "Without a Trace," *Sightings* recounts (and dramatizes) the disappearance of Australian pilot Fred Valentich's one-man plane some twenty years ago, and the fact that an American installation (a tracking station) called Pine Gap could conceivably have witnessed the aircraft's hijacking by UFOs. Testimony is recorded from Valentich's father, a man who believes firmly that the military is hiding "something," and by an amateur photographer who may have snapped a picture of the offending

extraterrestrial vehicle. Another story on the same hour explores the bond between animals and humans, while yet another details the Gateway (human body/mind) connection, and so forth.

Although “investigations” of mysterious crop circles, of a UFO landing in Zimbabwe in 1994 (witnessed by sixty-four school children!), and such are the bread and butter of the long-lived *Sightings*, the series also attempts to “scare” its audience by generating terror in many of these “investigative” segments. For instance, in the clip known as “The Doomsday Machine,” *Sightings* warns that the United States government is playing with a dangerous antenna farm in Alaska called HAARP (which has something to do with High Altitude Electronic Technology). Various sources, including Nick Begich, the author of *Angels Don't Play This HAARP*, warn that the technology could easily punch a hole in Earth's ionosphere and destroy it permanently ... rendering our existence on the planet untenable. At other points, various authorities make dire claims that HAARP has been designed to disable human minds on distant battlefields during times of war and is therefore a secret weapon developed by the U.S. military-industrial complex. The investigation is hardly a serious one, however, and only one representative of the maligned U.S. military is even interviewed. Strangely, he seems to operate the giant antenna farm out of a tiny trailer. In addition, he is purposefully sketchy in his answers, as if his interview has been edited in such a way as to make him seem squirrely and untrustworthy.

Other topics on *Sightings* include a serious look at spontaneous human combustion, an investigation of the near death phenomenon, new data from Tunguska, where some people (including an old shaman) believe that a cylinder-shaped flying saucer crashed in 1908. And, of course, there are various stories about hauntings and ghosts. In one episode of *Sightings*, Whaley House in San Diego is combed for examples of electro-magnetic energy signatures called “residue,” and Chris Chacon, director of the O.S.I.R. (Office of Scientific Investigation and Research) determines that the ghosts involved in the hauntings are actually sounds from the past, “retro-cognitive sounds,” being transmitted in the present. That explains why visitors come to the house and hear the clacking of hundred-year-old billiard balls!

In another “hauntings” story, a new condominium in St. Petersburg, Florida, is inhabited by the ghosts of students who once used the building as a high school in the 1920s. Terrified contemporary residents, who speak of glowing white lights and ghostly figures, are interviewed about their experiences.

All of this material is told with solemn face on *Sightings*, but there is often the feeling that the expert witnesses are in on the joke: making outrageous claims that seem insupportable, and in the end, are *not* supported except as speculation. In the school haunting piece, for example, a great deal of emphasis is placed on the fact that the paranormal investigators are researching en masse the reports of life-after-death there. *Sightings* laboriously catalogues all of the technological equipment being deployed (including infrared sensors and nightvision scopes), and there are extensive interviews with paranormal investigators about the strategy for “mapping” the school-turned-condo for ghosts. Then the story ends abruptly, without any report as to what was actually found during this very impressive-appearing investigation. Since the story ends without a revelation, with no answer about the hauntings, it is not difficult to infer that nothing of value was discovered at all! After all, if anybody had found something to report, *Sightings* surely would have reported it, right? One thing is for certain: if UFOs land, if HAARP starts destroying the ionosphere, if ghosts are proved to be “real,” *Sightings* is not going to be the broadcast venue through which these discoveries are reported and verified. Legitimate



news sources would cover so monumental a story because *Sightings* is just a pseudo-reality time-waster.

In 1999, *Sightings* is frequently rerun on the Sci-Fi Channel (2:00 P.M.), and it is actually good for a few cheap scares. For those among us out there who worry about asteroids colliding with Earth, doomsday prophecies, haunted houses, Nostradamus, ghosts, and the like, this show can be entertaining and thought-provoking. However, *Sighting's* motto might better be: "a mystery is never closed to a gullible mind," because no real, credible evidence is presented for any of the fantastic stories dramatized or discussed in detail. The audience for this show probably consists of the same people who went to see *The Blair Witch Project* (1999) and believed that what they were witnessing on the movie screen was "real." *Sightings* generates scares by the possibility that its tales of paranormal activity and UFO encounters *might* be real. For the skeptical, however, it is all too easy to poke holes in the interviews, canned dramatizations, and editing of the so-called expert testimonies. The host, the control room, the "live" witnesses, the statistical reports and data, and even the sense of paranoia and distrust *Sightings* engenders are all tools (analogous to gore, film techniques, or makeup on regular horror drama programming) employed to sell a bill of goods that reminds one of P.T. Barnum's famous quote: "There's a sucker born every minute." Be warned: if you believe, you'll feel duped.

## **2. PSI FACTOR: CHRONICLES OF THE PARANORMAL (1996– )**

### **CAST AND CREDITS**

*Cast:* Dan Aykroyd (Host); Nancy Anne Sakovich (Lindsey Donner); Barclay Hope (Peter Axon); Colin Fox (Anton Hendricks); **First Season:** Paul Miller (Connor Doyle); **Second Season:** Matt Frewer (Matt Praeger); Nigel Bennett (Frank Elsinger); Peter MacNeill (Ray Donohue).

*Credits:* *Created by:* Peter Aykroyd, Christopher Chacon, Peter Ventrell. *Consulting Producer:* Rick Drew. *Developed by:* James Nadler. *Producer:* David N. Rosen. *Production Designer:* Gordon Barnes. *Director of Photography:* John Holosko. *Executive Story Editor:* Damian Kindler. *Story Editor:* Sarah Dodd. *Music:* Lou Natale. *Editor:* Bruce Lange. *Executive Producers:* James Nadler, Seaton McLean, Peter Aykroyd, Christopher Chacon. *Associate Producer:* Matt Frewer. An Alliance Atlantis Production. In association with Eyemark, a Unit of CBS Enterprises. Produced in association with Global; Consultant: Kevin W. Juegensen.

### **THE DETAILS**

Like *Sightings*, *Psi Factor: Chronicles of the Paranormal* is another pseudo-reality TV program about the paranormal which is difficult to categorize because it has a distinctly schizophrenic format. On the one hand, this syndicated series purports to be a "real" investigation of occult and paranormal events, with "real" dramatizations of "real" paranormal cases. Lending support to this "real" reading of the show as "factual," one of its executive producers and creators is Christopher Chacon, the former head of O.S.I.R. who has appeared on *Sightings*. His presence on *Psi Factor* certainly lends some credence to the idea that someone on the creative end of the show wants this series to be taken seriously, as fact and as truth. Yet, on the other hand, the stories featured on *Psi Factor* are obviously works of total fiction, with no documentation, testimony, or eyewitness interviews proffered.

Like *Sightings* again, *Psi Factor* features a host, this time comedian Dan Aykroyd in what can only be described as somber Rod Serling mode. Aykroyd is seen standing inside an impressive control room in book-end appearances. *Psi Factor* even offers the following caveat at the opening of each episode (over the O.S.I.R. logo): “These stories are inspired by the actual case files of the Office of Scientific Investigation and Research.” In this case, a great deal of mileage is milked out of the word “inspired,” as many of the stories on *Psi Factor* involve time travel, UFO encounters, and other fictional, *X-Files*-style stories. Yet, at the same time that *Psi Factor* features a host stalking a complex control room and claims to be inspired by real events, it also mimics the slow-moving and deliberate camera style of the *X-Files*, and spotlights a high level of gore and violence. These format facets would seem to indicate that the show was intended to be seen as a straight horror program, like *Millennium*, *Brimstone*, *Strange World* or any other drama included in this book. Which is it? Fact or fiction? Unfortunately, *Psi Factor* is not a quality show as either fish or fowl.

Making matters worse for any potential categorization of this series, the first season of *Psi Factor* often features two half-hour stories per episode, which means that, like *Sightings* once more, these tales are to be considered “dramatizations” of “real” events, rather than the ongoing adventures of a team of investigators. Perhaps because people were so confused, this approach changed in the second, and recently aired third, season. Now *Psi Factor* features just one story per hour ... but nonetheless maintains the facade that it is “the truth,” as well as those annoying wraparound host segments.

In strong contradiction to the many *Sightings*/factual elements, however, the characters on the *Psi Factor* team are developed as if they are, indeed, fully-fledged fictional creations, just like Mulder and Scully or Frank Black. They even become bogged down in an *X-Files*-type of government conspiracy manipulated by Nigel Bennett of *Forever Knight* (1992-96) fame. Basically, *Psi Factor* is just one confused show that tries to have things both ways: it wants to be a *Sightings*-type series which purports to tell true stories at the same time that it generates dramatic characters and stories that can be taken as nothing other than works of fiction. Amazingly, the series handles neither elements of its contradictory formula in particularly adept fashion.

Specifically, the “team” members are one-dimensional characters who are portrayed by mostly unknown Canadian performers in the most basic manner. Nancy Anne Sakovich fails to register any recognizable human emotions. Colin Fox, the wizened statesman of the bunch, is so underutilized that he comes across as bland old man. In the second and third seasons, Matt Frewer leads the O.S.I.R. team (wearing a very unfortunate hair piece), but even his splendid eccentricity comes off as derivative of Fox Mulder’s individuality on *The X-Files*.

More offensive than the schizophrenic format or the boring central characters is the fact that *Psi Factor*, at least so far, appears to be written at an eighth-grade level. In one recent third season show, “Y2K,” Nigel Bennett’s character (Frank) asks a co-worker to keep him *appraised* of a situation. Of course, what he really meant was that he wanted to be *apprised* of the situation (i.e., kept informed), not that he wanted his monetary value judged. Likewise, in the same episode another character, Hope Barclay’s Peter Axon, mispronounces Silicon Valley as Sili *cone* Valley—a humorous error. For the writer’s future reference: Silicon Valley is where computers get made; Silicone Valley is where future supermodels get made. Also in “Y2K,” a computer screen displays a critical readout which erroneously indicates that it is 102 *degree*’s [sic] and rising in a certain chamber. Of course, degrees are a unit of measure, and should not be used in the possessive form. If something was the property of a degree (like a jacket or a briefcase) a possessive might reasonably be utilized, but in this case its use

was not warranted. Other episodes make the same basic mistakes in grammar, sentence structure, and vocabulary.

One thing a genre show can ill-afford in the day and age of the postmodern, self-reflexive, highly intelligent *Buffy*, *G vs E*, and *The X-Files* is to look stupid. Unfortunately, *Psi Factor* appears to be *The X-Files* as rewritten by morons. Dan Aykroyd's presence as host might indicate to some that these errors are intentional, part of some humorous undercurrent, but even Aykroyd is straight-laced and serious in this show. He presents the most awful dialogue imaginable with an utterly sober countenance, and one cannot help but think about *Ghostbusters*.

*Psi Factor* recently completed a third season, and is returning in the fall of 1999 for a fourth season. This means that the show is successful enough to be "stripped" and run on a daily basis ... so let the viewer beware.

## EPISODE LIST

### • *First Season (1996–1997)*

**1A. "The Underneath"** Written by Robert Cooper; Directed by Milan Cheylov; airdate: November 4, 1996.

**1B. "Phantom Limb"** Written by Sherman Snukal; Directed by Allan Kroeker; airdate: November 4, 1996.

**2A. "The Transient"** Written by Damian Kindler; Directed by Giles Walker; airdate: November 11, 1996.

**2B. "Two Lost Old Men"** Written by Ian Weir; Directed by Giles Walker; airdate: November 11, 1996.

**3A. "UFO Duplication"** Written by Robert Cooper; Directed by Mark Vizzard; airdate: November 18, 1996.

**3B. "Clara's Friend"** Written by Will Dixon; Directed by Mark Vizzard; airdate: November 18, 1996.

**4A. "The Hunter"** Written by Damian Kindler; Directed by John Bell; airdate: November 25, 1996.

**4B. "The Healer"** Written by Larry Raskin; Directed by John Bell; airdate: November 25, 1996.

**5A. "Dream House"** Written by Will Dixon; Directed by Allan Kroeker; airdate: December 2, 1996.

**5B. "UFO Encounter"** Written by James Nadler; Directed by Allan Kroeker; airdate: December 2, 1996.

**6A. "Possession"** Written by James Nadler; Directed by John Bell; airdate: December 9, 1996.

**6B. "Man Out of Time"** Written by Larry Raskin; Directed by Allan Kroeker; airdate: December 9, 1996.

- 7A. "Reptilian Revenge"** Written by Will Dixon; Directed by Giles Walker; airdate: December 16, 1996.
- 7B. "Ghostly Voices"** Written by Richard Oleksiak; Directed by Allan Kroeker; airdate: December 16, 1996.
- 8A. "Creeping Darkness"** Written by David Preston; Directed by John Bell; airdate: December 23, 1996.
- 8B. "The Power"** Written by Gerald Wexler; Directed by Allan Kroeker; airdate: December 23, 1996.
- 9A. "Freefall"** Written by Larry Raskin; Directed by Milan Cheylov; airdate: December 30, 1996.
- 9B. "The Presence"** Written by Ian Weir; Directed by John Bell; airdate: December 30, 1996.
- 10A. "Infestation"** Written by Damian Kindler; Directed by Giles Walker; airdate: January 6, 1997.
- 10B. "Human Apportation"** Written by Denise Fordham; Directed by John Bell; airdate: January 6, 1997.
- 11A. "The Curse"** Written by Will Dixon; Directed by Mark Vizzard; airdate: January 13, 1997.
- 11B. "Angel on a Plane"** Written by Ian Weir; Directed by Ken Girotti; airdate: January 13, 1997.
- 12A. "Anasazi Cave"** Written by Sherman Snukal; Directed by Mark Vizzard; airdate: January 20, 1997.
- 12B. "Devil's Triangle"** Written by Damian Kindler; Directed by Ken Girotti; airdate: January 20, 1997.
- 13A. "The Undead"** Written by Will Dixon; Directed by Clay Borris; airdate: January 27, 1997.
- 13B. "Stalker Moon"** Written by Alex Pugsley; Directed by Clay Borris; airdate: January 27, 1997.
- 14A. "The Forbidden North"** Written by Damian Kindler; Directed by Ken Girotti; airdate: February 3, 1997.
- 14B. "Reincarnation"** Written by Peter Aykroyd and Christopher Chacon; Directed by Ken Girotti; airdate: February 3, 1997.
- 15A. "Greenhouse Effect"** Written by Damian Kindler; Directed by Clay Borris; airdate: February 10, 1997.
- 15B. "The Buzz"** Written by Sherman Snukal; Directed by Clay Borris; airdate: February 10, 1997.
- 16. "The Light"** Written by Will Dixon; Directed by Milan Cheylov; airdate: April 7, 1997.
- 17A. "The 13th Floor"** Written by Jean Hurtubise; Directed by Clay Borris; airdate: April 7, 1997.

- 17B. "The Believer"** Written by Damian Kindler; Directed by Craig Pryce; airdate: April 7, 1997.
- 18A. "The Fog"** Written by Damian Kindler; Directed by Craig Pryce; airdate: April 14, 1997.
- 18B. "The House on Garden Street"** Written by Chris Dickie; Directed by Clay Borris; airdate: April 14, 1997.
- 19A. "Second Sight"** Written by Sherman Snukal; Directed by Milan Cheylov; airdate: April 21, 1997.
- 19B. "Chocolate Soldier"** Written by Will Dixon; Directed by Milan Cheylov; airdate: April 21, 1997.
- 20A. "The Fire Within"** Written by Richard Oleksiak; Directed by Aaron Shuster; airdate: April 28, 1997.
- 20B. "Fate"** Written by Damian Kindler; Directed by Aaron Shuster; airdate: April 28, 1997.
- 21A. "Death at Sunset"** Written by Jeremy Hole; Directed by Ross Clyde; airdate: May 5, 1997.
- 21B. "Collision"** Written by Sherman Snukal; Directed by Ross Clyde; airdate: May 5, 1997.
- 22. "Perestroika"** Written by Will Dixon; Directed by Giles Walker; airdate: May 12, 1997.
- *Second Season (1997–1998)*
- 23. "Threads"** Written by James Nadler; Directed by Milan Cheylov; airdate: September 22, 1997.
- 24. "Donor"** Written by Rick Drew; Directed by Milan Cheylov; airdate: September 29, 1997.
- 25. "Wish I May"** Written by Will Dixon; Directed by John Bell; airdate: October 6, 1997.
- 26. "Communion"** Written by Peter Mohan; Directed by John Bell; airdate: October 13, 1997.
- 27. "Frozen in Time"** Written by Tracey Forbes; Directed by Giles Walker; airdate: October 20, 1997.
- 28. "Devolution"** Written by John Dolin; Directed by Clay Borris; airdate: October 27, 1997.
- 29. "The Warrior"** Written by Rick Drew; Directed by Clay Borris; airdate: November 3, 1997.
- 30. "The Grey Men"** Written by James Nadler; Directed by Giles Walker; airdate: November 10, 1997.
- 31. "Man of War"** Written by Deborah Natrian; Directed by Stephen Williams; airdate: November 17, 1997.
- 32. "The Damned"** Written by Tony DiFranco; Directed by Clay Borris; airdate: November 24, 1997.
- 33. "Hell Week"** Written by Alex Rigsley; Directed by Craig Pryce; airdate: January 19, 1998.

34. **“The Edge”** Written by Tracey Forbes; Directed by Craig Pryce; January 26, 1998.
35. **“Bad Dreams”** Written by Will Dixon; Directed by Stephen Williams; airdate: February 2, 1998.
36. **“Kiss of the Tiger”** Written by Damian Kindler; Directed by Carl Alexander Goldstein; airdate: February 9, 1998.
37. **“The Haunting”** Written by Rick Drew; Directed by John Bell; airdate: February 16, 1998.
38. **“The Night of the Setting Sun”** Written by James Nadler; Directed by E. Jane Thompson; airdate: February 23, 1998.
39. **“The Labyrinth”** Written by Christiana Schull; Directed by Ron Oliver; airdate: April 4, 1998.
40. **“Pentimento”** Written by Sarah Dodd; Directed by Vincenzo Natali; airdate: April 13, 1998.
41. **“Frozen Faith”** Written by Matt Frewer; Directed by Ron Oliver; airdate: April 20, 1998.
42. **“Map to the Stars”** Written by Will Dixon; Directed by John Bell; airdate: April 27, 1998.
43. **“The Endangered”** Written by Rick Drew; Directed by Will Dixon; airdate: May 4, 1998.
44. **“Egress”** Written by James Nadler; Directed by John Bell; airdate: May 11, 1998.

# Space ... The Horrific Frontier

## SPACE: 1999 (1975–1977)

### CRITICAL RECEPTION

“*Space: 1999* is like *Star Trek* shot full of methedrine. It is the most flashy, gorgeous sci-fi trip ever to appear on TV. Watching it each week is very close to being under the influence of a consciousness altering drug.”—Benjamin Stein, *The Wall Street Journal*: “Sailing Along on a Moonbase Way,” Fall 1975.

“This series really must be seen to be believed, with a level of production values only achieved by spending a small defense budget on effects way ahead of their time ... The unique facet of *Space: 1999* was the exquisite feeling of loneliness and vulnerability brought across—anyone who still seriously describes *Babylon 5* as ‘all alone in the night’ needs to take a look at Moonbase Alpha.”—*Cult TV*, November 1995.

“It has what no other TV science-fiction program except *Star Trek* had—good stories and good special effects. The test of good science fiction is its ability to imagine alien life ... *Star Trek* started going downhill when it stopped relying on strong stories ... A recent *Space: 1999* not only presented a persuasive alien-like form, but played with it lightly ... Nice stuff.”—John Leonard, *The New York Times*: “So, Who Picked *Bronk* Over *Space: 1999*?,” October 19, 1975, page D27.

“*Space: 1999* is a visually stunning space-age morality play that chronicles the downfall of 20th century technological man ... That *Space: 1999* is a brilliant piece of 20th century technological art, film-making, is readily evident at a glance. What is perhaps less obvious is that the producers are using technology and art to talk about other issues.”—Arielle Emmett, Editor, *Science Digest*: “Adventures in Science Faction,” November 1975, pages 89-91.

“*Star Trek* was often less than scientific, frequently gaudy and nearly devoid of anything resembling acting ... *Space: 1999* seems to have at least one foot in science and a range of special effects and sets that would make even the emotionless Mr. Spock envious.”—Douglas Durden, *The Richmond-Times Dispatch*: “So Long *Star Trek*, Hello *Space: 1999*,” September 19, 1975.

### CAST AND CREDITS

*Cast*: Martin Landau (Commander John Koenig); Barbara Bain (Dr. Helena Russell); Nick Tate (Alan Carter); Zienia Merton (Sandra Benes); Anton Phillips (Dr. Bob Mathias). **First Season Only**: Barry Morse (Professor Victor Bergman); Clifton Jones (David Kano); Prentis Hancock (Paul Morrow); Suzanne Roquette (Tanya Alexander).

**Second Season Only**: Catherine Schell (Maya); Tony Anholt (Tony Verdeschi); John Hug (Bill Fraser); Jeffery Kissoon (Dr. Ben Vincent); Alibe Parsons (Alibe); Yasuko Nagasumi (Yasko).

*Credits*: *Creators*: Gerry and Sylvia Anderson. *Executive Producer*: Gerry Anderson. *Line Producer (first season)*: Sylvia Anderson. *Line Producer (second season)*: Fred Freiberger. *Director of Photography*: Frank Watts. *Camera Operators*: Tony White, Neil Binney. *Script Consultant*:

Christopher Penfold. *Script Editors (first season)*: Edward DiLorenzo, Johnny Byrne. *Music (first season)*: Barry Gray. *Music (second season)*: Derek Wadsworth. *Music Associate*: Vic Elms. *Music Editor*: Alan Willis. *Production Designer*: Keith Wilson. *Production Manager*: Ron Fry. *Casting Director*: Michael Barnes. *Assistant Director*: Ken Baker. *Supervising Editor*: David Lane. *Editors*: Mike Campbell, Derek Hyde Chambers, Alan Killick. *Sound Editors*: Roy Lafbery, Peter Pennell. *Sound Recordist*: David Bowen. *Continuity*: Gladys Goldsmith, Phyllis Townsend. *Special Effects Director*: Brian Johnson. *Special Effects Assistant*: Nick Alder. *SPFX Camera Operator*: Frank Drake. *SPFX Lighting Cameraman*: Harry Oakes. *Electronics*: Michael S.E. Downing. *Miniatures*: Brian Johnson, Nick Alder, Martin Bower. *Makeup*: Basil Newall, Ann Cotton. *Hair Designer*: Helene Bevan. *Wardrobe*: Eileen Sullivan. *Moon City Costumes Designed by*: Rudi Gernreich. An ITC/RAI co-production produced by Group Three. Processed by Rank Film Laboratories. Made at Pinewood Studios, Buckinghamshire, England.

## THE DETAILS

Costing a then-staggering \$275,000 per episode, the British-made *Space: 1999* burst on the television scene in the fall of 1975 in a firestorm of publicity. In its time on the air, it managed to fracture science fiction fandom in a way that no TV series before or after it has quite managed. To be blunt, *Space: 1999* was a revolutionary series which polarized its audience. Reaction to it was totally varied: it either impressed and wowed its audience with its mind-blowing, well-dramatized forays to bizarre alien realms, or confused the hell out of people with its *2001: A Space Odyssey* minimalist approach to narrative resolution and explanation, depending wholly on one's viewing predispositions. The "impressed" percentage of the viewing audience was bowled over by the incredible, visually fantastic story of Moonbase Alpha, a turn-of-the-millennium lunar installation, which was sent careening into uncharted outer space after a nuclear accident at Alpha's atomic waste dump. The confused part of the audience consisted mostly of *Star Trek* fans and adherents who were expecting (and demanding!) another *Star Trek*, but discovered instead a very different show with a very different, and very specific philosophy.

What makes *Space: 1999* so different from virtually any other outer space adventure series ever created, and what merits its mention in a book about the horror genre, is the fact that the series creators, Gerry and Sylvia Anderson (*UFO* [1969-70]) offered a totally original, heretofore unseen view of outer space. This was not your father's *Star Trek*, where planets were joined across the "ocean" of space, and each world was part of either a cosmic United Nations called the Federation or an unknown "island" worthy of exploration. Instead, *Space: 1999* refused to adhere to the time-worn "United Worlds" concept of outer space that has been so important to every space drama since time immemorial, including *Space Patrol* (1951-52), *Buck Rogers in the 25th Century* (1979-81), *Babylon 5* (1993-98), and the like. In its place, *Space: 1999* offered this thesis: the universe—because humankind is not prepared to understand it—is a place of abject, spine-chilling terror. Even the most wonderful or harmless mechanisms of the universe seem frightening and "unknown" to the stalwart denizens of Moonbase Alpha, because its people are 20th-century men and women. The humans marooned there, even the heroic Commander Koenig, Doctor Russell, Alan Carter, and Professor Bergman, are psychologically and technologically unprepared for their quest through the stars. Thus their fears and concerns often get the better of them in the drama of the week.

To *Star Trek* fans, this idea of space as "scary" was sacrilege, heresy even. *Star Trek* was so successful in syndication because it spread a message of optimism about the future and space exploration. *Space:*



1999 had far more impact in visual terms, but it jettisoned the idea of optimism and brotherhood, and opted instead for an even-now unmatched “scare ride” through the cosmos. Most science fiction critics and *Star Trek* fans never understood that *Space: 1999* was determinedly different from *Star Trek*, and so it was bashed brutally at conventions on the basis that it was a (bad) rip-off of *Star Trek*. Indeed, if one really believes *Space: 1999* is trying to be like *Star Trek*, the series will prove disappointing. In the rosy, sunlight universe of *Star Trek*, the frightening adventures of Moonbase Alpha make little or no sense. If, on the other hand, one views *Space: 1999* as a horror show set in the arena of space, its merits become obvious. Ironically (as the above-listed reviews reveal), most impartial (i.e., *not Star Trek* fans) reviewers at the time of *Space: 1999*’s premiere liked it as well as, if not better than, *Star Trek*. It is just that twenty years of revisionist “Trekkie” history (written by *Trek* fans) have cast the show in an unflattering light ... all because of a misperception about its intentions as drama.

As this book has acknowledged again and again, how a series utilizes horror imagery to convey its themes is a telling example of its quality. *Space: 1999* understood precisely how to deploy the imagery of film to generate its outer space terrors, and several installments of the series are horror concepts simply translated to outer space (as *Forever Knight* transposed horror concepts with the cop genre, and *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* brings horror conceits to the terrifying realm of ... high school). A futuristic analogy for demonic possession is utilized in “Force of Life” when a Moonbase Alpha crewman named Zoref (an anagram for the word “froze”) is possessed by an alien life form who requires heat, and resorts to murder to acquire it. This episode, written by Johnny Byrne, overdoses on brilliant camera technique as slow-motion photography, extreme angles, intense close-ups, and a swivel of the camera into the upside-down position express the terror of an alien incursion on the lost space base. In particular, the upside-down camera turn works beautifully to support the story of “Force of Life.” As the camera turns over dramatically in the last shot of the teaser, it symbolically indicates to viewers that Moonbase Alpha will be turned on its head by this unwanted “visitor.”

The slow-motion photography utilized in the episode also lengthens the chases (hence the suspense) as the alien stalks its victims, and so forth. Did *Star Trek* ever attempt to tell its stories of alien civilizations with such visual legerdemain? That desire, that constant effort to infuse the genre with horrific stories and horrific camera work, distinguishes *Space: 1999* from the rest of the outer space pack.

The central conceit of *Space: 1999*, that space equals a realm of futurist horror, was repeated a variety of times. “The Troubled Spirit” (also by Johnny Byrne) translated the age-old “vengeful” ghost story to outer space, as Alpha was menaced by an apparition conjured during a strange experiment. A technological séance and exorcism replaced occult ones. An evil child with vicious mental abilities, like the ones featured in *Village of the Damned* (1960), was the subject of “Alpha Child,” by Christopher Penfold. “Dragon’s Domain” saw the Moonbase crew face a vicious alien monster which swallowed unsuspecting crewmembers whole and then spit out their desiccated, steaming corpses. This particular episode was worthy of *The Twilight Zone* as it featured an astronaut who warned Alpha about the monster, but was unheeded. In its depiction of outer space terror and monsters, *Space: 1999* was also quite influential, paving the way for the *Alien* saga (in ’79, ’86, ’92, and ’97 respectively).

“End of Eternity” saw Moonbase Alpha menaced by an immortal creature called Balor who had been “cast out” by his people, and the overall story was a Lucifer/expulsion from Paradise parable. The climax saw Moonbase Alpha’s outmatched Commander Koenig vanquish the villainous Balor by

tricking him out of an airlock, in what was surely a reference to the story of David vs. Goliath. “Guardian of Piri” retold the myth of Odysseus and the sirens, with unwitting Alphan crew members seduced by a beautiful android (Catherine Schell) who cloaked a world of total brain death. “Space Brain” was a drama about Alpha’s passage through a giant, destructive space-organism, and so forth. Even “Earthbound” was horror in a sense because it found a perfect technological metaphor for the age-old fear of being buried alive. In this case, the Alphan commissioner (Roy Dotrice) found himself awake inside a cryogenic compartment that was not due to be opened for seventy-five years. The ending, in which he pounds at the glass canister in an unsuccessful attempt to get out, was positively chill-inducing.

Virtually every story in *Space: 1999*’s first season was a reiteration and translation of famous horror stories into the venue of space, but few understood the method of what appeared to be its madness. After all, in the 1970s, there had not yet been a mainstream horror success such as *The X-Files*, and so most carping *Star Trek* fans actually feared what they could not understand: a horror TV series that just happened to be set in the realm of the great void beyond. Though *Space: 1999* garnered amazing ratings in syndication in America during its first year, the powers-that-be in ITC New York decided that it would be better for *Space: 1999* to change its format and be more like the happy *Star Trek*. Thus, the second season of *Space: 1999* was more user friendly, and more in the vein of Gene Roddenberry’s vision, with the universe generally seeming less mysterious and less horrific than in the stellar year one of the show. Still, year two did occasionally find time to explore horror: zombified crew members played a part in “All That Glisters,” disgusting alien beasts tricked the Alphans out of their life-support system in the two-part “Bringers of Wonder,” and two sociopathic immortal teenagers threatened the lost lunar colony in the memorable “The Exiles.”

The second season revamp failed to win *Space: 1999* many new fans, and the show was unceremoniously canceled in 1977, just weeks short of the release of *Star Wars*, after the production of forty-eight episodes. Today a small but vocal fandom remembers that before *The X-Files* made science-oriented horror popular, and before *Aliens* knew that in “space, nobody can hear you scream,” *Space: 1999* and Moonbase Alpha were bouncing around the airwaves and terrifying the hell out of anyone who cared to give the show a thoughtful viewing.

## EPISODE LIST

*Note:* Airdates have not been included here, as the episodes were shown in different order from city to city. Episodes are listed here in production order.

### • *First Season (1975–1976)*

1. **“Breakaway”** Written by George Bellak; Directed by Lee H. Katzin.
2. **“Matter of Life and Death”** Written by Art Wallace and Johnny Byrne; Directed by Charles Crichton.
3. **“Black Sun”** Written by David Weir; Directed by Lee H. Katzin.
4. **“Ring Around the Moon”** Written by Edward DiLorenzo; Directed by Ray Austin.
5. **“Earthbound”** Written by Anthony Terpiloff; Directed by Charles Crichton.

6. **“Another Time, Another Place”** Written by Johnny Byrne; Directed by David Tomblin.
  7. **“Missing Link”** Written by Edward DiLorenzo; Directed by Ray Austin.
  8. **“Guardian of Piri”** Written by Christopher Penfold; Directed by Charles Crichton.
  9. **“Force of Life”** Written by Johnny Byrne; Directed by David Tomblin.
  10. **“Alpha Child”** Written by Christopher Penfold; Directed by Ray Austin.
  11. **“The Last Sunset”** Written by Christopher Penfold; Directed by Charles Crichton.
  12. **“Voyager’s Return”** Written by Johnny Byrne; Directed by Bob Kellett.
  13. **“Collision Course”** Written by Anthony Terpiloff; Directed by Ray Austin.
  14. **“Death’s Other Dominion”** Written by Anthony Terpiloff and Elizabeth Barrows; Directed by Charles Crichton.
  15. **“The Full Circle”** Written by Jesse Lasky Jr. and Pat Silver; Directed by Bob Kellett.
  16. **“End of Eternity”** Written by Johnny Byrne; Directed by Ray Austin.
  17. **“War Games”** Written by Christopher Penfold; Directed by Charles Crichton.
  18. **“The Last Enemy”** Written and Directed by Bob Kellett.
  19. **“The Troubled Spirit”** Written by Johnny Byrne; Directed by Ray Austin.
  20. **“Space Brain”** Written by Christopher Penfold; Directed by Charles Crichton.
  21. **“The Infernal Machine”** Written by Anthony Terpiloff and Elizabeth Barrows; Directed by David Tomblin.
  22. **“Mission of the Darrians”** Written by Johnny Byrne; Directed by Ray Austin.
  23. **“Dragon’s Domain”** Written by Christopher Penfold; Directed by Charles Crichton.
  24. **“The Testament of Arkadia”** Written by Johnny Byrne; Directed by David Tomblin.
- *Second Season (1976–1977)*
25. **“The Metamorph”** Written by Johnny Byrne; Directed by Charles Crichton.
  26. **“The Exiles”** Written by Donald James; Directed by Ray Austin.
  27. **“One Moment of Humanity”** Written by Tony Barwick; Directed by Charles Crichton.
  28. **“Journey to Where”** Written by Donald James; Directed by Tom Clegg.

29. **“All That Glisters”** Written by Keith Miles; Directed by Ray Austin.
30. **“The Taybor”** Written by Thom Keyes; Directed by Bob Brooks.
31. **“The Mark of Archanon”** Written by Lew Schwartz; Directed by Charles Crichton.
32. **“The Rules of Luton”** Written by Charles Woodgrove; Directed by Val Guest.
33. **“New Adam, New Eve”** Written by Terence Feely; Directed by Charles Crichton.
34. **“Brian the Brain”** Written by Jack Ronder; Directed by Kevin Connor.
35. **“The AB Chrysalis”** Written by Tony Barwick; Directed by Val Guest.
36. **“Catacombs of the Moon”** Written by Anthony Terpiloff; Directed by Robert Lynn.
37. **“Seed of Destruction”** Written by John Goldsmith; Directed by Kevin Connor.
38. **“The Beta Cloud”** Written by Charles Woodgrove; Directed by Robert Lynn.
39. **“A Matter of Balance”** Written by Pip and Jane Baker; Directed by Charles Crichton.
40. **“Space Warp”** Written by Charles Woodgrove; Directed by Peter Medak.
41. and 42. **“The Bringers of Wonder” (Parts I and II)** Written by Terence Feely; Directed by Tom Clegg.
43. **“Dorzak”** Written by Christopher Penfold; Directed by Charles Crichton.
44. **“The Lambda Factor”** Written by Terrence Dicks; Directed by Charles Crichton.
45. **“Devil’s Planet”** Written by Michael Winder; Directed by Tom Clegg.
46. **“The Séance Spectre”** Written by Donald James; Directed by Peter Medak.
47. **“The Immunity Syndrome”** Written by Johnny Byrne; Directed by Bob Brooks.
48. **“The Dorcons”** Written by Johnny Byrne; Directed by Tom Clegg.

# **Part III**

## **Further Thoughts**

## Conclusion

Where will terror TV turn from here? If the horror-filled nineties are any indication of the future, terror TV in the next decade will become more terrifying, more titillating, and more terrific than ever. *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, *The X-Files*, *G vs E*, and even the quickly-canceled *Brimstone* are all suggestive of a postmodern approach to the genre that is as appealing as it is intelligent. Although some recent TV series attempting to ape this difficult formula have failed from artistic standpoints (i.e., the recently renewed *Charmed*), there is every reason to suspect that Chris Carter and Joss Whedon, two stars of modern terror TV, have additional horrors up their sleeves. The short-lived but high-quality *Harsh Realm* and *Angel* are two genre productions which indicate that these new Rod Serlings will be terrifying audiences for years, and perhaps decades, to come.

Though horror-oriented anthologies and soap operas have fallen on hard times as the millennium turns, the expansion of syndication, of cable series, and of new networks like UPN and the WB suggest that, overall, horror will continue to grow, to improve, and to be a critical factor in television's future history. The Sci-Fi Channel recently saved *Poltergeist: The Legacy* from the charnel pit of cancellation (only to cancel it a season later), and there is every reason to believe that it will soon develop further original programming of an equally macabre nature. The USA Network had a critical and ratings hit on its hands with *G vs E*, which suggests that its low-quality genre programming (*Alfred Hitchcock Presents*, *The Hitchhiker*) is a thing of the past.

As cable networks grow bolder and pose a greater threat to the "old" American networks, horror will certainly be a central part of their ratings equation. The "cult" audience is now large enough to save programs on the smaller networks, where once their rating numbers would have signaled instant cancellation.

One thing is certain, as long as there is television, there will be terror television. After all, the world of today (and presumably of tomorrow) is fraught with numerous fears and terrors. School violence, gun control, Y2K, designer drugs, outbreaks of new diseases, state-sanctioned censorship, environmental meltdown, political scandals, global apocalypse, religious zealotry, racial bigotry, nuclear war, economic recession, the possibility of a new energy crisis ... these are things that make us face our future with shudders and shivers. Thus the television artists of today and tomorrow will only grow bolder in their attempts to target what scares us, and then use that knowledge to help us learn about ourselves and our world.

But, until the next new wave, fans of the genre will content themselves with further seasons of *The X-Files*, *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* and *Charmed*, while savoring reruns of *Millennium*, and *Poltergeist: The Legacy*, wishing for continuations of *Forever Knight* and *Brimstone*, and hoping for a feature film version of the classic *Kolchak: The Night Stalker*.

Ironically, terror television, a world of neverending darkness and terror, has a bright future.

## ***Appendix A: The Fifty Most Common Concepts in Modern Terror Television***

Horror television, like science fiction television, has its “standards,” the ideas, stories, and concepts repeated again and again, sometimes beyond all reason, sometimes beyond all sanity. In science fiction TV for instance, audiences have seen the “evil twin” story replayed in *Star Trek* (as “Enemy Within,” “What Are Little Girls Made Of,” “Whom Gods Destroy”), *Space: 1999* (as “Seed of Destruction”), *Logan’s Run* (as “Half Life”), *Star Trek: The Next Generation* (as “Datalore”), *Buck Rogers in the 25th Century* (as “Ardala Returns”), *Doctor Who* (1963-89) (as “The Android Invasion,” “The Androids of Tara,” “Enemy of the World,” “The Massacre”), and others. For a horror story notion to be counted as a cliché, the same plot idea/concept must occur at least three times. In the list below, these clichés are included in no particular order.

### ***1. The Transplant***

In which a transplanted organ or limbs (usually a hand, arm, or eye) wreaks havoc on its new recipient or recipients.

1. *Rod Serling’s Night Gallery*: “The Hand of Borgus Weems” (1971)
2. *The Sixth Sense*: “The Eyes That Wouldn’t Die” (1972)
3. *Circle of Fear*: “Spare Parts” (1973)
4. *The Evil Touch*: “A Game of Hearts” (1974)
5. *Quinn Martin’s Tales of the Unexpected*: “A Hand for Sonny Blue” (1977)
6. *Monsters*: “Where Is the Rest of Me?” (1988)
7. *Monsters*: “Leavings” (1990)

### ***2. The Vampire***

In which a specific type of “creature of the night,” with an aversion to sunlight, crosses, and garlic, is featured.

1. *Rod Serling’s Night Gallery*: “Miss Lovecraft Sent Me” (1971)
2. *Rod Serling’s Night Gallery*: “The Devil Is Not Mocked” (1971)
3. *Rod Serling’s Night Gallery*: “A Matter of Semantics” (1971)
4. *Rod Serling’s Night Gallery*: “A Midnight Visit to the Neighborhood Blood Bank” (1971)
5. *Rod Serling’s Night Gallery*: “The Funeral” (1972)
6. *Rod Serling’s Night Gallery*: “Death on a Barge” (1973)
7. *Rod Serling’s Night Gallery*: “How to Cure the Common Vampire” (1973)
8. *Ghost Story/Circle of Fear*: “Elegy for a Vampire” (1972)
9. *Kolchak: The Night Stalker*: “Vampire” (1974)
10. *Curse of Dracula*: Series Concept (1979)
11. *The Hitchhiker*: “Nightshift” (1984)
12. *Tales from the Darkside*: “Strange Love” (1986)
13. *Tales from the Darkside*: “My Ghostwriter—The Vampire” (1987)
14. *Friday the 13th: The Series*: “The Baron’s Bride” (1988)
15. *Monsters*: “The Vampire Hunter” (1988)

16. *Monsters*: “Pool Sharks” (1988)
17. *Monsters*: “Shave and a Haircut, Two Bites” (1990)
18. *Dracula: The Series*: Series Concept (1990)
19. *Tales from the Crypt*: “The Secret” (1990)
20. *Love and Curses*: “Habeas Corpses” (1991)
21. *Tales from the Crypt*: “The Reluctant Vampire” (1991)
22. *Tales from the Crypt*: “Mournin’ Mess” (1991)
23. *Dark Shadows*: Series Concept (1991)
24. *Forever Knight*: Series Concept (1992-96)
25. *Beyond Reality*: “The Passion” (1993)
26. *The X-Files*: “3” (1994)
27. *Tales from the Crypt*: “Comes the Dawn” (1995)
28. *Tales from the Crypt*: “Cold War” (1996)
29. *Kindred: The Embraced*: Series Concept (1996)
30. *The X-Files*: “Bad Blood” (1998)
31. *Poltergeist: The Legacy*: “Darkness Falls” (1998)
32. *Poltergeist: The Legacy*: “Light of Day” (1998)
33. *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*: Series Concept
34. *Angel*: Series Concept

### **3. The Werewolf**

In which a horror series examines the lore and life of werewolves.

1. *Rod Serling’s Night Gallery*: “The Phantom Farmhouse” (1971)
2. *Kolchak: The Night Stalker*: “The Werewolf” (1974)
3. *Darkroom*: “The Bogeyman Will Get You” (1981)
4. *Tales from the Darkside*: “The Circus” (1986)
5. *Werewolf*: Series Concept (1987-88)
6. *Tales from the Darkside*: “Family Reunion” (1988)
7. *Monsters*: “One Wolf’s Family” (1990)
8. *Monsters*: “Werewolf of Hollywood” (1990)
9. *She Wolf of London/Love and Curses*: Series Concept (1990-91)
10. *Tales from the Crypt*: “Werewolf Concerto” (1992)
11. *The X-Files*: “Shapes” (1994)
12. *Poltergeist: The Legacy*: “Rough Beast” (1997)
13. *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*: “Bewitched, Bewildered and Bothered” (1998)

### **4. Astral Projection**

In which a character is able to control an “out of body” experience, usually to exact revenge on someone who has wronged him.

1. *Rod Serling’s Night Gallery*: “The Last Laurel” (1970)
2. *The Sixth Sense*: “Once Upon a Chilling” (1972)
3. *The Next Step Beyond*: “Out of Body” (1978)



4. *Friday the 13th: The Series*: “Crippled Inside” (1989)
5. *Beyond Reality*: “Justice” (1992)
6. *Charmed*: “Wicca Envy” (1998)
7. *Charmed*: “The Power of Two” (1999)

## 5. *The Evil Doll*

In which a fiendish child’s doll comes to life to stalk unwitting victims.

1. *Rod Serling’s Night Gallery*: “The Doll” (1971)
2. *Friday the 13th: The Series*: “The Inheritance” (1987)
3. *Poltergeist: The Legacy*: “Revelations” (1996)
4. *The X-Files*: “Chinga” (1997)

## 6. *Youth Is Fleeting, Unless ...*

In which a demon/hellspawn/evil person will do anything, even kill, even suck the life force of others, to recapture his/her youth, beauty, or life-force.

1. *Kolchak: The Night Stalker*: “The Youth Killers” (1975)
2. *Friday the 13th: The Series*: “Cup of Time” (1988)
3. *She Wolf of London*: “Nice Girls Don’t” (1990)
4. *Forever Knight*: “If Looks Could Kill” (1993)
5. *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*: “Anne” (1998)
6. *Charmed*: “I’ve Got You Under My Skin” (1998)
7. *Poltergeist: The Legacy*: “Father to Son” (1998)

## 7. *Merry Christmas*

In which a horror story centers around the holiday season, particularly Christmas.

1. *Night Gallery*: “The Messiah on Mott Street” (1971)
2. *Tales from the Darkside*: “Seasons of Belief” (1986)
3. *Tales from the Darkside*: “The Yattering and Jack” (1987)
4. *Monsters*: “Glim-Glim” (1989)
5. *Tales from the Crypt*: “And All Through the House” (1989)
6. *Monsters*: “A New Woman” (1990)
7. *Millennium*: “Midnight of the Century” (1997)
8. *The X-Files*: “A Christmas Carol” (1997)
9. *Poltergeist: The Legacy*: “The Gift” (1997)
10. *Millennium*: “Omerta” (1998)
11. *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*: “Amends” (1998)
12. *The X-Files*: “How the Ghosts Stole Christmas” (1998)

## **8. Jack the Ripper Returns!**

In which the most famous of slashers, or a killer inspired by him, is on the loose again.

1. *The Sixth Sense*: “With Affection, Jack the Ripper” (1972)
2. *Kolchak: The Night Stalker*: “The Ripper” (1974)
3. *Friday the 13th: The Series*: “Doctor Jack” (1987)
4. *Forever Knight*: “Bad Blood” (1995)

## **9. Places to Eat/Hang Out**

In which a trendy restaurant or club becomes a recurring setting for a horror TV series.

1. “Nightmare Cafe” (*Nightmare Cafe*)
2. “The Raven” (*Forever Knight*)
3. “The Haven” (*Kindred: The Embraced*)
4. “The Bronze” (*Buffy the Vampire Slayer*)
5. “Quake” (*Charmed*)

## **10. Adventures in Chinatown**

Wherein the protagonists of the series find themselves exploring the Chinese part of town, and thus exploiting Asian myths of the supernatural.

1. *Friday the 13th: The Series*: “Tattoo” (1988)
2. *Beyond Reality*: “The Fire Within” (1991)
3. *Forever Knight*: “Cherry Blossoms” (1992)
4. *The X-Files*: “Hell Money” (1995)
5. *Poltergeist: The Legacy*: “Fox Spirit” (1996)
6. *Forever Knight*: “Let No Man Tear Asunder” (1996)
7. *Charmed*: “Dead Man Dating” (1998)

## **11. Titanic**

Wherein events on the doomed ship play a part in a new terror.

1. *Rod Serling’s Night Gallery*: “Lone Survivor” (1971)
2. *Friday the 13th: The Series*: “What A Mother Wouldn’t Do” (1988)
3. *Freddy’s Nightmares*: “It’s My Party and You’ll Die If I Want You To” (1989)
4. *Forever Knight*: “Black Buddha, Part I” (1995)

## **12. Evil Twins/Doubles**

In which characters are faced with villainous duplicates, twins, or doppelgangers.

1. *Kolchak: The Night Stalker*: “Firefall” (aka “The Doppelganger”) (1974)
2. *Dracula: The Series*: “Double Darkness” (1990)
3. *Beyond Reality*: “Doppelganger” (1991)
4. *Tales from the Crypt*: “Operation Friendship” (1994)
5. *The X-Files*: “Colony”/“End Game” (1994)
6. *The X-Files*: “Small Potatoes” (1996)
7. *Millennium*: “Antipas” (1999)
8. *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*: “The Wish” (1999)
9. *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*: “Doppelgangland” (1999)

### **13. Haunted Theaters**

In which a theater (usually one that is about to be closed down) becomes a setting for terror.

1. *She Wolf of London*: “Bride of the Wolfman” (1991)
2. *Dracula: The Series*: “What a Pleasant Surprise” (1991)
3. *Beyond Reality*: “Theatre of the Absurd” (1992)

### **14. Meet the Succubus**

In which a female demon lures men to their deaths in (usually) erotic fashion.

1. *Kolchak: The Night Stalker*: “Demon in Lace” (1975)
2. *Beyond Reality*: “Siren Song” (1992)
3. *The X-Files*: “Avatar” (1996)
4. *Poltergeist: The Legacy*: “Black Widow” (1997)
5. *Poltergeist: The Legacy*: “She’s Got the Devil in Her Heart” (1999)

### **15. The Pen Is Mightier than the Sword...**

In which the act of creation, either through writing, painting or performing, sparks an evil turn of events.

1. *Tales from the Darkside*: “Printer’s Devil” (1986)
2. *Friday the 13th: The Series*: “Poison Pen” (1988)
3. *Monsters*: “Pillow Talk” (1988)
4. *Freddy’s Nightmares*: “The Art of Death” (1989)
5. *Monsters*: “Portrait of the Artist” (1989)
6. *Friday the 13th: The Series*: “Mightier Than the Sword” (1990)
7. *Beyond Reality*: “Dead Air” (1993)
8. *The X-Files*: “Milagro” (1999)

### **16. Terror Rocks at a Concert**

In which a rock concert is a setting for horror and evil.

1. *Alfred Hitchcock Presents*: “Career Move” (1988)
2. *Friday the 13th: The Series*: “Mesmer’s Bauble” (1989)
3. *Forever Knight*: “Dying For Fame” (1992)
4. *Dark Skies*: “Dark Days Night” (1996)
5. *Millennium*: “Thirteen Years Later” (1998)

### **17. Horror Goes to the Circus**

In which the circus, or circus dwellers, relate to a world of horror and evil.

1. *The Evil Touch*: “The Trial” (1974)
2. *Tales from the Darkside*: “If the Shoe Fits” (1985)
3. *Tales from the Darkside*: “The Circus” (1985)
4. *Werewolf*: “Blind Luck” (1987)
5. *Friday the 13th: The Series*: “Wax Magic” (1989)
6. *Tales from the Crypt*: “Lower Berth” (1990)
7. *She Wolf of London*: “Big Top She Wolf” (1991)
8. *Tales from the Crypt*: “Food for Thought” (1993)
9. *The X-Files*: “Humbug” (1994)

### **18. Evil Tattoos**

In which tattoos are unexpectedly the source of unspeakable evil and terror.

1. *Friday the 13th: The Series*: “Tattoo” (1988)
2. *The X-Files*: “Never Again” (1996)
3. *The Burning Zone*: “Elegy for a Dream” (1997)

### **19. Ventriloquists’ Dummies Come to Life**

In which we see a variation on the Evil Doll cliché, this time with a nefarious ventriloquist’s puppet planning evil as he comes to life.

1. *Friday the 13th: The Series*: “Read My Lips” (1989)
2. *Tales from the Crypt*: “The Ventriloquist’s Dummy” (1990)
3. *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*: “The Puppet Show” (1997)

### **20. An Inexplicable Snowfall**

In which snow comes down at the oddest and most inexplicable of times.

1. *Rod Serling’s Night Gallery*: “Silent Snow, Secret Snow” (1972)
2. *Millennium*: “The Sound of Snow” (1998)

3. *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*: “Amends” (1998)

## **21. Horror on Your Radio Dial**

In which the horror involves an opinionated radio talk show host and his/her program.

1. *Rod Serling’s Night Gallery*: “The Flip Side of Satan” (1971)
2. *Tales from the Darkside*: “Devil’s Advocate” (1985)
3. *Freddy’s Nightmares*: “Silence Is Golden” (1989)
4. *Friday the 13th: The Series*: “The Butcher” (1989)
5. *Monsters*: “A Face for Radio” (1990)
6. *Tales from the Crypt*: “The New Arrival” (1992)
7. *Beyond Reality*: “Dead Air” (1993)
8. *Tales from the Crypt*: “In the Groove” (1994)
9. *Forever Knight*: “Dead Air” (1992)

## **22. A Fear of Drowning**

In which a series’ protagonist reveals that the thing he/she is most afraid of is ... drowning.

1. *Beyond Reality*: “Bloodstone” (1993) protagonist: Dr. Wingate
2. *Charmed*: “From Fear to Eternity” (1999) protagonist: Prue Halliwell
3. *Millennium*: “Seven-In-One” (1999) protagonist: Frank Black

## **23. The San Francisco (Trick or) Treat**

For some reason, horror seems to go hand in hand with San Francisco. At least three modern horror series are set there.

1. *Poltergeist: The Legacy* (1996-99)
2. *Kindred: The Embraced* (1996)
3. *Charmed* (1998– )

## **24. Happy Halloween**

In which the horrific events of an episode occur on Halloween or “All Hallow’s Eve.”

1. *Tales from the Darkside*: “Trick or Treat” (1983)
2. *Tales from the Darkside*: “Halloween Candy” (1985)
3. *Werewolf*: “All Hallow’s Eve” (1987)
4. *Friday the 13th: The Series*: “Halloween” (1987)
5. *Freddy’s Nightmares*: “Freddy’s Tricks and Treats” (1988)
6. *She Wolf of London*: “The Juggler” (1990)
7. *Millennium*: “The Curse of Frank Black” (1997)

8. *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*: “Halloween” (1997)

## **25. Horror Goes Native American**

In which the lore of the American Indian informs the horror of a terror TV episode.

1. *Kolchak: The Night Stalker*: “Bad Medicine” (1974)
2. *Kolchak: The Night Stalker*: “The Energy Eater” (“Matchemondo”) (1974)
3. *Werewolf*: “Skinwalker” (1987)
4. *Monsters*: “Raindance” (1988)
5. *Friday the 13th: The Series*: “The Shaman’s Apprentice” (1989)
6. *Monsters*: “Half as Old as Time” (1989)
7. *Forever Knight*: “Blackwing” (1995)
8. *The X-Files*: “Anasazi” (1995)
9. *The X-Files*: “The Blessing Way” (1995)
10. *Dark Skies*: “Ancient Future” (1996)
11. *Millennium*: “A Single Blade of Grass” (1997)
12. *Poltergeist: The Legacy*: “Shadow Fall” (1997)
13. *Poltergeist: The Legacy*: “Bird of Prey” (1999)

## **26. Hell Hounds**

In which the nemesis of the week is a vicious dog with supernatural powers, usually with glowing eyes and slobbery, sharp fangs.

1. *Ghost Story/Circle of Fear*: “Creatures of the Canyon” (1972)
2. *Quinn Martin’s Tales of the Unexpected*: “The Pack” (1977)
3. *The Hitchhiker*: “Man’s Best Friend” (1985)
4. *Forever Knight*: “Blind Faith” (1995)
5. *Millennium*: “Beware of the Dog” (1997)
6. *The X-Files*: “Alpha” (1999)
7. *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*: “The Prom” (1999)

## **27. Artificial Intelligence**

In which intelligent machines threaten to replace humans as the dominant life form on the planet.

1. *Rod Serling’s Night Gallery*: “You Can’t Get Help Like That Anymore” (1972)
2. *Darkroom*: “Closed Circuit” (1981)
3. *The X-Files*: “Ghost in the Machine” (1993)
4. *The X-Files*: “Kill Switch” (1997)

## **28. The Body Swap**

In which a series' lead is forced to physically exchange bodies with another character, usually villainous.

1. *Tales from the Darkside*: "The Swap" (1987)
2. *Friday the 13th: The Series*: "The Long Road Home" (1990)
3. *Monsters*: "The Bargain" (1990)
4. *Tales from the Crypt*: "The Switch" (1990)
5. *The X-Files*: "Lazarus" (1993)
6. *The X-Files*: "Dreamland I"/"Dreamland II" (1998)
7. *Poltergeist: The Legacy*: "Irish Jug" (1998)
8. *Poltergeist: The Legacy*: "Song of the Raven" (1999)

### **29. The Personification of Death**

In which death is depicted as a person or figure (i.e., The Grim Reaper) who comes a callin' when "it is time."

1. *Monsters*: "Reaper" (1989)
2. *Tales from the Crypt*: "The Man Who Was Death" (1989)
3. *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*: "Killed by Death" (1998)
4. *Millennium*: "Borrowed Time" (1999)
5. *The X-Files*: "Tithonus" (1999)

### **30. Photo Finish**

In which the horror of the week involves a photographer and/or camera.

1. *Tales from the Darkside*: "The Spirit Photographer" (1987)
2. *Freddy's Nightmares*: "Photo Finish" (1989)
3. *The X-Files*: "Unruhe" (1996)
4. *The X-Files*: "Tithonus" (1999)

### **31. The Blind Leading the Blind**

In which a sightless person is involved in the horror, and even helps to solve the case, using blindness as a positive attribute rather than as a handicap.

1. *Tales from the Crypt*: "Revenge Is the Nuts" (1994)
2. *Forever Knight*: "Blind Faith" (1995)
3. *The X-Files*: "Mind's Eye" (1997)
4. *Charmed*: "Sightless" (1999)

### **32. The Exorcism**

In which the devil (or a demon) inhabits or possesses a character and must be removed through an exorcism.

1. *Tales from the Darkside*: “The Trouble with Mary Jane” (1985)
2. *Beyond Reality*: “The Dying of the Light” (1993)
3. *The X-Files*: “The Calusari” (1994)
4. *Forever Knight*: “Sons of Belial” (1995)
5. *Poltergeist: The Legacy*: “Pilot” (1996)

### **33. *Welcome to the Afterlife ... Almost ... Nope, Not Quite***

In which series regulars find themselves hovering on the border of death, about to make a personal epiphany about the afterlife, only to be yanked back to life so that their series can continue.

1. *The X-Files*: “One Breath” (1994)
2. *The X-Files*: “The Blessing Way” (1995)
3. *Forever Knight*: “Near Death”(1995)
4. *The Burning Zone*: “Lethal Injection” (1996)

### **34. *The Clips Show***

In which money is saved by recycling footage from older episodes and fitting them into a plot where the protagonists conveniently recollect these “events” in their lives. (This is the scariest cliché of all.)

1. *Friday the 13th: The Series*: “Bottle of Dreams” (1988)
2. *Dracula: The Series*: “My Dinner with Lucard” (1991)
3. *Forever Knight*: “Close Call” (1995)
4. *Poltergeist: The Legacy*: “A Traitor Among Us” (1996)
5. *Poltergeist: The Legacy*: “The Choice” (1997)
6. *Poltergeist: The Legacy*: “Trapped” (1997)
7. *Poltergeist: The Legacy*: “Armies of the Night” (1998)
8. *Poltergeist: The Legacy*: “Darkside” (1998)

### **35. *A Cloud Over Desert Storm***

In which a crime in Operation Desert Storm (conducted by soldier, government, or Iraq) comes back to haunt the protagonists and guest stars.

1. *The X-Files*: “The Walk” (1995)
2. *Millennium*: “Collateral Damage” (1998)
3. *Poltergeist: The Legacy*: “Finding Richter” (1997)
4. *Poltergeist: The Legacy*: “Debt of Honor” (1998)
5. *Strange World*: Series Concept (1999)



### **36. Reincarnation**

In which a protagonist's past lives come into play as he/she encounters others from past lives. (This usually involves hypnotic regression.)

1. *Beyond Reality*: "Echoes of Evil" (1991)
2. *Beyond Reality*: "Keepsake" (1993)
3. *The X-Files*: "The Field Where I Died" (1996)
4. *Forever Knight*: "Francesca" (1996)
5. *Poltergeist: The Legacy*: "La Belle Dame Sans Merci" (1998)

### **37. Silence of the Lambs**

In which a series' protagonist and a serial killer face-off in an interview, leaving the protagonist shaken and fearful because the horrible killer knows and understands so much about him/her.

1. *The X-Files*: "Beyond the Sea" (1994)
2. *Forever Knight*: "Trophy Girl" (1996)
3. *The X-Files*: "Paper Hearts" (1996)
4. *Millennium*: "The Thin White Line" (1996)
5. *Poltergeist: The Legacy*: "Song of the Raven" (1999)

### **38. The Painting Is a Portal**

In which a painting on the wall is actually a doorway or gateway to another world/time/dimension.

1. *Rod Serling's Night Gallery*: "The Escape" (1970)
2. *Rod Serling's Night Gallery*: "The Painted Mirror" (1971)
3. *Tales from the Darkside*: "Heretic" (1985)
4. *Monsters*: "Portrait of the Artist" (1989)
5. *Friday the 13th: The Series*: "The Charnel Pit" (1990)
6. *Beyond Reality*: "The Color of Mad" (1992)
7. *Poltergeist: The Legacy*: "The Painting" (1999)

### **39. Deep Freeze**

In which a character in cryogenic suspension manages to reach out of this storage venue and attack or communicate with others.

1. *The Sixth Sense*: "Once Upon a Chilling" (1972)
2. *Beyond Reality*: "The Cold" (1992)
3. *The X-Files*: "Roland" (1993)

### **40. Retarded Development**

In which mentally impaired people (usually young men) develop sudden ... but ultimately reversible ... new intelligence through supernatural means.

1. *Friday the 13th: The Series*: “Brain Drain” (1988)
2. *The X-Files*: “Roland” (1993)
3. *Forever Knight*: “Fallen Idol” (1996)
4. *Poltergeist: The Legacy*: “The Human Vessel” (1998)

#### **41. Sweet Dreams**

In which the world of dreams turns deadly.

1. *Kolchak: The Night Stalker*: “The Spanish Moss Murders” (1975)
2. *The Hitchhiker*: “And if We Dream” (1985)
3. *Tales from the Darkside*: “Dream Girl” (1986)
4. *Freddy’s Nightmares*: Series Concept (1988-90)
5. *Monsters*: “Perchance to Dream” (1990)
6. *The X-Files*: “Sleepless” (1994)
7. *Sleepwalkers*: Series Concept (1997)
8. *Charmed*: “Dream Sorcerer” (1998)

#### **42. Me and My Shadow**

In which a shadow turns out to be murderous and/or an agent of the supernatural.

1. *Rod Serling’s Night Gallery*: “Certain Shadows on the Wall” (1971)
2. *Friday the 13th: The Series*: “Shadow Boxer” (1987)
3. *The X-Files*: “Soft Light” (1995)

#### **43. Sign In at the Blood Bank Please**

In which a blood bank is a setting for the supernatural and/or terror.

1. *Rod Serling’s Night Gallery*: “A Matter of Semantics” (1971)
2. *Tales from the Crypt*: “The Reluctant Vampire” (1991)
3. *The X-Files*: “3” (1994)

#### **44. The Mob Mentality**

In which the good citizens of a decent town or city become vengeful vigilantes and killers, thirsting for the blood of those whom they deem guilty.

1. *Nightmare Cafe*: “Aliens Ate my Lunch” (1992)
2. *Forever Knight*: “Undue Process” (1994)
3. *The X-Files*: “Post-Modern Prometheus” (1997)

4. *Millennium*: “Monster” (1997)
5. *Millennium*: “Through a Glass Darkly” (1998)

#### **45. *Welcome to the Nut House***

In which the setting for horror is an insane asylum or sanitarium for the criminally insane.

1. *Rod Serling’s Night Gallery*: “The Phantom Farmhouse” (1971)
2. *Friday the 13th: The Series*: “And Now the News” (1988)
3. *She Wolf of London*: “Moonlight Becomes You” (1990)
4. *Poltergeist: The Legacy*: “Fear” (1997)
5. *Millennium*: “The Pest House” (1998)
6. *The X-Files*: “Biogenesis” (1999)

#### **46. *Nightmare at 20,000 Feet***

In which the setting for horror is an airplane—already in flight!

1. *The Sixth Sense*: “Coffin, Coffin in the Sky” (1972)
2. *Freddy’s Nightmares*: “Cabin Fever” (1989)
3. *The X-Files*: “Tempus Fugit”/“Max” (1996)
4. *The Burning Zone*: “Night Flight” (1996)
5. *Poltergeist: The Legacy*: “Let Sleeping Demons Lie” (1997)
6. *Millennium*: “The Innocents” (1998)
7. *G vs E*: “Airplane” (1999)

#### **47. *The Nursing Home***

In which the setting for horror is an old folk’s home.

1. *Werewolf*: “Amazing Grace” (1988)
2. *Monsters*: “Reaper” (1989)
3. *The X-Files*: “Excelsius Dei” (1994)
4. *Millennium*: “Matryoshka” (1999)

#### **48. *Join Us!***

In which a religious cult is the horror of the week.

1. *The X-Files*: “Red Museum” (1994)
2. *Forever Knight*: “Faithful Followers” (1994)
3. *The X-Files*: “The Field Where I Died” (1996)
4. *The Burning Zone*: “Hall of the Serpent” (1996)
5. *Millennium*: “Gehenna” (1996)

6. *Millennium*: “Jose Chung’s ‘Doomsday Defense’” (1998)
7. *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*: “Reptile Boy” (1998)
8. *Poltergeist: The Legacy*: “The Enlightened One” (1998)
9. *Poltergeist: The Legacy*: “Unholy Congress” (1999)
10. *Strange World*: “Spirit Falls” (1999)

#### **49. Firestarter!**

In which fire is wielded as the terror of the week.

1. *Beyond Reality*: “Enemy in Our Midst” (1991)
2. *The X-Files*: “Fire” (1993)
3. *Forever Knight*: “The Fire Inside” (1995)
4. *Poltergeist: The Legacy*: “The Enlightened One” (1998)

#### **50. Kids and Violence**

In which the problem of child or teen violence is examined in our society, and sometimes discovered to have paranormal, supernatural causes.

1. *Millennium*: “Monster” (1997)
2. *Prey*: “Progeny” (1998)
3. *Millennium*: “Teotwawki” (1998)
4. *Brimstone*: “Faces” (1999)
5. *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*: “Earshot” (1999)

## Appendix B: The Terror Television Hall of Fame

After watching several hours of modern terror TV, audiences will start to recognize some familiar faces. Listed below (in alphabetical order) is a roster of the actors and actresses who have appeared numerous times in various horror shows in the last quarter-century. To be included in this appendix, the performer must fulfill two criteria. First, he or she must appear on at least two different series (thus characters who appear on five or more episodes of *The X-Files*, but no other series, for instance, are *not* on the list). Secondly, each Hall of Famer must make at least three genre appearances overall.

At this time, cult favorite Darren McGavin is the work-horse male horror star, having made multiple appearances on at least seven different genre programs (*Kolchak: The Night Stalker*, *The Evil Touch*, *The Hitchhiker*, *Tales from the Darkside*, *Monsters*, *The X-Files*, and *Millennium*). Young Kristin Lehman is a contender for top female star, having had top-line, starring, and recurring roles on three horror series (*Poltergeist: The Legacy*, *Strange World*, *Forever Knight*) and logging in a memorable guest appearance on *The X-Files* (“Kill Switch”).

### THE HALL OF FAME

**Ian Abercrombie:** “The Canary Sedan” (*Alfred Hitchcock Presents* [1986]); “Homecoming” (*Buffy the Vampire Slayer* [1998]); “To Be or Not to Be ... Evil” (*G vs E* [1999]).

**R.C. Armstrong:** “Gallows in the Wind” (*The Sixth Sense* [1972]); “The Inheritance” (*Friday the 13th: The Series* [1987]); “Hellowe’en” (*Friday the 13th: The Series* [1987]); “What a Mother Wouldn’t Do” (*Friday the 13th: The Series* [1988]); “Bottle of Dreams” (*Friday the 13th: The Series* [1988]); “Doorway to Hell” (*Friday the 13th: The Series* [1988]); “Beware of the Dog” (*Millennium* [1997]); “Owls” (*Millennium* [1998]); “Roosters” (*Millennium* [1998]).

**John Astin:** “Pamela’s Voice” (*Rod Serling’s Night Gallery* [1971]); “Hell’s Bells” (*Rod Serling’s Night Gallery* [1971]); “The Girl with the Hungry Eyes” (*Rod Serling’s Night Gallery* [1972]); “The Graveyard Shift” (*Ghost Story* [1973]).

**Rene Auberjonois:** “Camera Obscura” (*Rod Serling’s Night Gallery* [1971]); “St. Michael’s Nightmare” (*The Burning Zone* [1996]); “Irish Jug” (*Poltergeist: The Legacy* [1998]); “Wishful Thinking” (*Poltergeist: The Legacy* [1999]).

**Bernard Behrens:** “A Stolen Heart” (*Alfred Hitchcock Presents* [1988]); “Pirate’s Promise” (*Friday the 13th: The Series* [1988]); “Eye of Death” (*Friday the 13th: The Series* [1989]); Series Regular: *Dracula the Series* (1990–1991); “Late for Dinner” (*Beyond Reality* [1992]); “Blood Money” (*Forever Knight* [1995]).

**Nigel Bennett:** “Survival of the Fittest” (*Alfred Hitchcock Presents* [1988]); “The Butcher” (*Friday the 13th: The Series* [1989]); “Sins of the Father” (*Beyond Reality* [1991]); Series Regular: *Forever Knight* (1992–1996).

**David Birney:** “The New House” (*Ghost Story* [1972]); “The Nomads” (*Quinn Martin’s Tales of the Unexpected* [1977]); “Portents” (*Poltergeist: The Legacy* [1999]).

**Joseph Campanella:** “The Nature of the Enemy” (*Rod Serling’s Night Gallery* [1970]); “Miss Lovecraft Sent Me” (*Rod Serling’s Night Gallery* [1971]); “The Man Who Died at Three and Nine” (*The Sixth Sense* [1972]); “Evilator” (*G vs E* [1999]).

**Michael Cavanaugh:** Semiregular: *Dark Shadows* (1991); “Conduit” (*The X-Files* [1993]); “Night Flight” (*The Burning Zone* [1996]).

**John Colicos:** “Lone Survivor” (*Rod Serling’s Night Gallery* [1970]); “Deathmate” (*Alfred Hitchcock Presents* [1987]); “My Dear Watson” (*Alfred Hitchcock Presents* [1989]); “Bloodstone” (*Beyond Reality* [1993]).

**Michael Constantine:** “The Boy Who Predicted Earthquakes” (*Rod Serling’s Night Gallery* [1971]); “Guillotine” (*Darkroom* [1982]); “Pipe Dream” (*Friday the 13th: The Series* [1988]).

**Lynne Cormack:** “The Inheritance” (*Friday the 13th: The Series* [1987]); “What a Mother Wouldn’t Do” (*Friday the 13th: The Series*); Semiregular Character: *Dracula the Series* (1990-91); “Mirror, Mirror” (*Beyond Reality* [1991]).

**Ronny Cox:** “Devil Pack” (*Quinn Martin’s Tales of the Unexpected* [1977]); “Seige of 31 August” (*Darkroom* [1982]); “Road Hog” (*Alfred Hitchcock Presents* [1986]).

**Don S. Davis:** Series Regular: *Twin Peaks* (1990-91); “Aliens Ate My Lunch” (*Nightmare Cafe* [1992]); “Beyond the Sea” (*The X-Files* [1994]); “One Breath” (*The X-Files* [1994]); “The Inheritance” (*Poltergeist: The Legacy* [1996]).

**Nikki de Boer:** Series Regular: *Beyond Reality* (1991-93); “Dark Knight” (*Forever Knight* [1992]); “Crystal Scarab” (*Poltergeist: The Legacy* [1996]).

**Paul Dooley:** “The Old Soft Shoe” (*Tales from the Darkside* [1986]); “The Well-Worn Lock” (*Millennium* [1996]); “Passed Imperfect” (*Sleepwalkers* [1997]).

**Brad Dourif:** “The Legendary Billy B” (*The Hitchhiker* [1987]); “People Who Live in Brass Hearses ...” (*Tales from the Crypt* [1993]); “Beyond the Sea” (*The X-Files* [1993]); “Force Majeure” (*Millennium* [1996]).

**Billy Drago:** “Read My Lips” (*Friday the 13th: The Series* [1989]); “Cocoon” (*Monsters* [1989]); “From Fear to Eternity” (*Charmed* [1999]).

**Leif Erickson:** “The Academy” (*Rod Serling’s Night Gallery* [1971]); “The Heart That Wouldn’t Stay Buried” (*The Sixth Sense* [1972]); “Something in the Woodwork” (*Rod Serling’s Night Gallery* [1973]); “Kaidatcha Country” (*The Evil Touch* [1974]).

**Fab Filippo:** “A Mind of Their Own” (*Beyond Reality* [1992]); “The Enlightened One” (*Poltergeist: The Legacy* [1998]); “Faith, Hope and Trick” (*Buffy the Vampire Slayer* [1998]); “Beauty and the Beasts” (*Buffy the Vampire Slayer* [1998]); “Homecoming” (*Buffy the Vampire Slayer* [1998]).

**Page Fletcher:** Series Regular: *The Hitchhiker* (1983-91); “Pen Pal” (*Alfred Hitchcock Presents* [1989]); “Baby, Baby” (*Forever Knight* [1995]).

**Denis Forest:** “Cupid’s Quiver” (*Friday the 13th: The Series* [1987]); “Tragedy Tonight” (*Alfred Hitchcock Presents* [1988]); “Brain Drain” (*Friday the 13th: The Series* [1988]); “The Mephisto Ring” (*Friday the 13th: The Series* [1989]); “My Wife as a Dog” (*Friday the 13th: The Series* [1990]); “Double Darkness” (*Dracula: The Series* [1990]); “The Heart of the Mystery” (*Nightmare Cafe* [1992]).

**Steve Forrest:** “The Waiting Room” (*Rod Serling’s Night Gallery* [1972]); “Echo of a Distant Scream” (*The Sixth Sense* [1972]); “The Summer House” (*Ghost Story* [1972]); “Hatred Unto Death” (*Rod Serling’s Night Gallery* [1973]).

**Meg Foster:** “Gallows in the Wind” (*The Sixth Sense* [1972]); “At the Cradle Foot” (*Ghost Story* [1972]); “Spare Parts” (*Circle of Fear* [1973]); “The Martyr” (*The Hitchhiker* [1989]).

**John Glover:** “Striptease” (*The Hitchhiker* [1989]); “Undertaking Pallor” (*Tales from the Crypt* [1991]); Series Regular: *Brimstone* (1998).

**Seth Green:** “Monsters in My Room” (*Tales from the Darkside* [1985]); “Deep Throat” (*The X-Files* [1993]); Series Regular: *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* (1997–).

**Stacy Haiduk:** Series Regular: *Kindred: The Embraced* (1996); “Encore” (*Brimstone* [1998]); “It’s a Helluva Life” (*Brimstone* [1999]); “Mourning After” (*Brimstone* [1999]); “Feats of Clay” (*Charmed* [1999]).

**Lance Henriksen:** “Cutting Cards” (*Tales from the Crypt* [1990]); “Yellow” (*Tales from the Crypt* [1991]); Series Regular: *Millennium* (1996-99).

**James Hong:** “It All Comes Out in the Wash” (*Tales from the Darkside* [1985]); “Cherry Blossoms” (*Forever Knight* [1992]); “Hell Money” (*The X-Files* [1996]); “Bardo Thodol” (*Millennium* [1999]).

**Kim Hunter:** “The Late Mr. Peddington” (*Rod Serling’s Night Gallery* [1972]); “Mr. McDermitt’s New Patients” (*The Evil Touch* [1973]); “Wings of Death” (*The Evil Touch* [1974]).

**Geordie Johnson:** “User Deadly” (*Alfred Hitchcock Presents* [1988]); Series Regular: *Dracula: The Series* (1990-91); “The Color of Mad” (*Beyond Reality* [1992]); “The Fire Inside” (Voice Only) (*Forever Knight* [1994]); “My Boyfriend Is a Vampire” (*Forever Knight* [1996]); “The Painting” (*Poltergeist: The Legacy* [1999]).

**Jeff Kober:** “Ice” (*The X-Files* [1993]); Series Regular: *Kindred: The Embraced* (1996); “Helpless” (*Buffy the Vampire Slayer* [1999]); “The Power of Two” (*Charmed* [1999]); “Song of the Raven” (*Poltergeist: The Legacy* [1999]); “Bird of Prey” (*Poltergeist: The Legacy* [1999]).

**Karin Konoval:** “Home” (*The XFiles* [1996]); “Weeds” (*Millennium* [1997]); “Through a Glass Darkly” (*Millennium* [1998]); “Wishful Thinking” (*Poltergeist: The Legacy* [1999]).

**Bernie Kopell:** “The Boy Who Predicted Earthquakes” (*Rod Serling’s Night Gallery* [1971]); “The Trevi Collection” (*Kolchak: The Night Stalker* [1975]); “Which Prue Is It Anyway?” (*Charmed* [1999]).

**Robert Lansing:** “The Lake” (*The Evil Touch* [1973]); “Full Disclosure” (*Alfred Hitchcock Presents*

[1988]); “The Vampire Hunter” (*Monsters* [1988]).

**Kristin Lehman:** Series Semiregular: *Forever Knight* (1995-96); “Kill Switch” (*The X-Files* [1997]); Series Regular: *Poltergeist: The Legacy* (1998-99); Series Regular: *Strange World* (1999).

**Larry Linville:** “The Academy” (*Rod Serling’s Night Gallery* [1971]); “The House That Cried Murder” (*The Sixth Sense* [1972]); *The Night Stalker* (1972); “Chopper” (*Kolchak: The Night Stalker* [1975]).

**Carol Lynley:** “Last Rites for a Dead Druid” (*Rod Serling’s Night Gallery* [1972]); “The House That Cried Murder” (*The Sixth Sense* [1972]); *The Night Stalker* (1972); “Dear Cora, I’m Going to Kill You” (*The Evil Touch* [1974]); “Stressed Environment” (*Monsters* [1990]).

**E.G. Marshall:** “A Death in the Family” (*Rod Serling’s Night Gallery* [1971]); “Seasons of Belief” (*Tales from the Darkside* [1986]); “The Impatient Patient” (*Alfred Hitchcock Presents* [1988]).

**David McCallum:** “The Phantom Farmhouse” (*Rod Serling’s Night Gallery* [1971]); “Murder Party” (*Alfred Hitchcock Presents* [1988]); “The Feverman” (*Monsters* [1988]).

**Darren McGavin:** *The Night Stalker* (1972); *The Night Strangler* (1973); “A Game of Hearts” (*The Evil Touch* [1973]); “George” (*The Evil Touch* [1973]); “Gornak’s Prism” (*The Evil Touch* [1974]); Series Regular: *Kolchak The Night Stalker* (1974-75); “Nightshift” (*The Hitchhiker* [1985]); “Distant Signals” (*Tales from the Darkside* [1985]); “Portrait of the Artist” (*Monsters* [1989]); “Travellers” (*The X-Files* [1997]); “Midnight of the Century” (*Millennium* [1997]); “Aqua Mala” (*The X-Files* [1999]).

**Stephen E. Miller:** “In the Name of Love” (*The Hitchhiker* [1987]); “Duane Barry” (*The X-Files* [1994]); “Pilot” (*Millennium* [1996]); “Let Sleeping Demons Lie” (*Poltergeist: The Legacy* [1997]); Series Semiregular (*Millennium* [1998-99]).

**James Morrison:** “A World of Difference” (*Werewolf* [1987]); “Dead Letters” (*Millennium* [1996]); “Infiltration” (*Prey* [1998]); “Transformations” (*Prey* [1998]); “Veil” (*Prey* [1998]).

**Glen Morshower:** “Mercury Rising” (*Dark Skies* [1996]); “All Souls” (*The X-Files* [1998]); “The Fourth Horseman” (*Millennium* [1998]); “The Time Is Now” (*Millennium* [1998]).

**Leslie Nielsen:** “Phantom of What Opera?” (*Rod Serling’s Night Gallery* [1971]); “A Question of Fear” (*Rod Serling’s Night Gallery* [1971]); “The Obituary” (*The Evil Touch* [1973]); “The Voyage” (*The Evil Touch* [1974]).

**Natalija Nogulich:** “Dead Right” (*Tales from the Crypt* [1990]); “Mercury Rising” (*Dark Skies* [1996]); “Existence” (*Prey* [1998]).

**Jeanette Nolan:** “The Housekeeper” (*Rod Serling’s Night Gallery* [1970]); “Since Aunt Ada Came to Stay” (*Rod Serling’s Night Gallery* [1971]); “The Shadow in the Well” (*The Sixth Sense* [1972]); “The New House” (*Ghost Story* [1972]).

**Terry O’Quinn:** “The Bribe” (*Tales from the Crypt* [1994]); “Aubrey” (*The X-Files* [1995]); Series Semiregular: *Millennium* (1996-99).



**Peter Outerbridge:** “Faye and Ivy” (*Nightmare Cafe* [1992]); “Pilot” (*The X-Files* [1993]); “Father’s Day” (*Forever Knight* [1994]); Series Semiregular: *Millennium* (1998-99).

**Geraldine Page:** “Stop Killing Me” (*Rod Serling’s Night Gallery* [1972]); “The Sins of the Fathers” (*Rod Serling’s Night Gallery* [1972]); “Touch of Madness” (*Ghost Story/Circle of Fear* [1972]); “W.G.O.D.” (*The Hitchhiker* [1985]).

**Joanna Pettet:** “The House” (*Rod Serling’s Night Gallery* [1970]); “Keep in Touch: We’ll Think of Something” (*Rod Serling’s Night Gallery* [1971]); “The Caterpillar” (*Rod Serling’s Night Gallery* [1972]); “The Girl with the Hungry Eyes” (*Rod Serling’s Night Gallery* [1972]); “You’re Not Alone” (*Quinn Martin’s Tales of the Unexpected* [1977]).

**Sarah-Jane Redmond:** “Aubrey” (*The X-Files* [1995]); “Lamentation” (*Millennium* [1997]); “Schizogeny” (*The X-Files* [1998]); “A Room with No View” (*Millennium* [1998]); “Antipas” (*Millennium* [1999]); “Saturn Dreaming of Mercury” (*Millennium* [1999]); “Pilot” (*Strange World* [1999]).

**Channon Roe:** Series Regular: *Kindred: The Embraced* (1996); “Kaddish” (*The X-Files* [1997]); “The Zeppo” (*Buffy the Vampire Slayer* [1999]).

**Mimi Rogers:** *Twin Peaks* (one episode) (1991); “Beauty Rest” (*Tales from the Crypt* [1992]); “The End” (*The X-Files* [1998]); “The Beginning” (*The X-Files* [1998]); “Biogenesis” (*The X-Files* [1999]).

**Clayton Rohner:** “Doctor’s Orders” (*The Hitchhiker* [1987]); “Rain King” (*The X-Files* [1999]); Series Regular: *G vs E* (1999–).

**John Saxon:** “I’ll Never Leave You—Ever” (*Rod Serling’s Night Gallery* [1972]); “Lady, Lady, Take My Life” (*The Sixth Sense* [1972]); “The Specialty of the House” (*Alfred Hitchcock Presents* [1988]); “The Waiting Room” (*Monsters* [1991]).

**Raphael Sbarge:** “Pilot” (*Werewolf* [1987]); “Perchance to Dream” (*Monsters* [1990]); “We Shall Overcome” (*Dark Skies* [1996]); “Blind Sided” (*Charmed* [1999]).

**Louise Sorel:** “The Dead Man” (*Rod Serling’s Night Gallery* [1970]); “Pickman’s Model” (*Rod Serling’s Night Gallery* [1971]); “The Ghost of Potter’s Field” (*Circle of Fear* [1973]), Series Regular: *Cliffhangers: The Curse of Dracula* (1979).

**Susan Strasberg:** “Midnight Never Ends” (*Rod Serling’s Night Gallery* [1971]); “Once Upon a Chilling” (*The Sixth Sense* [1972]); “The Doll of Death” (*Rod Serling’s Night Gallery* [1973]); “Marci” (*The Evil Touch* [1973]); “Effect and Cause” (*Tales from the Darkside* [1985]).

**Roy Thinnes:** “The Final Chapter” (*Quinn Martin’s Tales of the Unexpected* [1977]); “Talitha Cumi” (*The X-Files* [1996]); “Herrenvolk” (*The X-Files* [1996]); “Crystal Scarab” (*Poltergeist: The Legacy* [1996]).

**Brian Thompson:** “To Dream of Wolves” (*Werewolf* [1988]); “Gray Wolf” (*Werewolf* [1988]); “Colony” (*The X-Files* [1995]); “End Game” (*The X-Files* [1995]); “Herrenvolk” (*The X-Files* [1996]); Semiregular character: *Kindred: The Embraced* (1996); “Talitha Cumi” (*The X-Files* [1996]);

“Welcome to the Hellmouth” (Parts I and II) (*Buffy the Vampire Slayer* [1997]); “Patient X” (*The X-Files* [1998]); “The Red and the Black” (*The X-Files* [1998]); “The Unnatural” (*The X-Files* [1999]).

**Kate Trotter:** “The Hunted” (Parts I and II) (*Alfred Hitchcock Presents* [1988]); “The Quilt of Hathor” (Parts I and II) (*Friday the 13th: The Series* [1988]); “And Now the News” (*Friday the 13th: The Series* [1988]); “Repetition” (*Friday the 13th: The Series* [1990]); “I Love Lucard” (*Dracula: The Series* [1990]); “Intimate Shadows” (*Beyond Reality* [1991]).

**Ray Walston:** “The Trial” (*The Evil Touch* [1973]); “Dear Beloved Monster” (*The Evil Touch* [1973]); “Tales of the Undead” (*Friday the 13th: The Series* [1987]).

**Fritz Weaver:** “A Question of Fear” (*Rod Serling’s Night Gallery* [1971]); “Monster in the Closet” (*Tales from the Darkside* [1984]); “The Prophecies” (*Friday the 13th: The Series* [1989]); “Jar” (*Monsters* [1989]); “Tunguska” (*The X-Files* [1997]); “Terma” (*The X-Files* [1997]).

**Floyd Red Crow Westerman:** “Anasazi” (*The X-Files* [1995]); “The Blessing Way” (*The X-Files* [1995]); “Shadow Fall” (*Poltergeist: The Legacy* [1997]); “A Single Blade of Grass” (*Millennium* [1997]); “Biogenesis” (*The X-Files* [1999]).

**Ellen Weston:** “The Boy Who Predicted Earthquakes” (*Rod Serling’s Night Gallery* [1971]); “Five Widows Weeping” (*The Sixth Sense* [1972]); “The Devil’s Platform” (*Kolchak: The Night Stalker* [1974]).

**Robert Wisden:** “Final Twist” (*Alfred Hitchcock Presents* [1988]); “Career Move” (*Alfred Hitchcock Presents* [1988]); “Pusher” (*The X-Files* [1996]); “Eye of the Beholder” (*Sleepwalkers* [1997]); “Monster” (*Millennium* [1997]); “Kitsunegari” (*The X-Files* [1998]); “Someone to Watch Over Me” (*Poltergeist: The Legacy* [1998]); “Teotwawki” (*Millennium* [1998]); “Still Waters” (*Poltergeist: The Legacy* [1999]).

**Vivian Wu:** “Comes the Dawn” (*Tales from the Crypt* [1995]); “Siren” (*Millennium* [1998]); *Strange World*: Series Regular (1999).

**Geraint Wyn-Davies:** “Reunion” (*Alfred Hitchcock Presents* [1989]); Series Semiregular: *Dracula the Series* (1990-91); Series Regular: *Forever Knight* [1992-96]).

**Grace Zabriskie:** Series Regular: *Twin Peaks* (1990-91); “The Secret” (*Tales from the Crypt* [1990]); “Touch of the Dead” (*The Burning Zone* [1996]).

## Appendix C: The Ten Best Terror Television Programs (1970–1999)

As one might imagine, this was a difficult list to compile, but the ten choices enumerated below represent this author's choices for the ten best horror series of the time period covered in this text. It is interesting to note that of all ten series, only two selected as "best" came from the '70s (*Kolchak* and *Night Gallery*), and that no series whatsoever from the 1980s made the list (though *Werewolf* [1987] would probably qualify as the best horror series of that decade). Otherwise, this list is made up exclusively of programs from the last decade of the twentieth century. This selection does not reflect a bias against older shows, but merely the fact that the 1990s opened up a whole new era for horror television. Better makeup, better acting, and better writing in the 1990s produced horrifying visions as wonderful and as varied as *The X-Files*, *Twin Peaks*, and *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, this author's choice for the top three slots.

*American Gothic*, *Brimstone*, and *Kindred: The Embraced* are all short-lived series that lasted only one season, but which nonetheless managed to be artistic, different, and a lot of fun overall. *American Gothic* lived up to its title by being a gothic romance, and Gary Cole created a romantic "monster" with aplomb. *Kindred* was a compelling horror soap opera with an unmatched, sexy cast, and *Brimstone* was televised film noir at its best, with Peter Horton playing a compelling antihero detective. It may be a little early to name USA's *G vs E* one of the ten best terror TV shows of the last thirty years, but it is so smart, so intelligent in its technique, and so witty in its stories that it seems unfair *not* to include it.

As for the honorable mentions: *Prey* was a worthy paranoia trip whose serial format made each episode compelling viewing, and *Forever Knight* was a low-budget show that really developed into something quite special and managed to create interesting characters and explore the concept of vampire as addict.

1. *The X-Files* (1993– ) (Fox)
2. *Twin Peaks* (1990-91) (ABC)
3. *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* (1997– ) (WB)
4. *Millennium* (1996-99) (Fox)
5. *Kolchak: The Night Stalker* (1974-75) (ABC)
6. *Brimstone* (1998) (Fox)
7. *Rod Serling's Night Gallery* (1970-73) (NBC)
8. *G vs E* (1999– ) (USA)
9. *American Gothic* (1995) (CBS)
10. *Kindred: The Embraced* (1996) (Fox)

Honorable Mentions: ABC's *Prey* (1998), the syndicated *Forever Knight* (1992-96)

## Appendix D: The Five Worst Terror Television Programs (1970–1999)

Each of the series listed below represents a low point for the genre, and is included because it did not just one thing, but a variety of things, wrong. *Freddy's Nightmares* wasted the talents of Robert Englund, featured uninteresting stories, and was so cheap that it appeared homemade. *Stephen King's The Golden Years* has the distinction of being the most uninteresting series covered in this text. Not one thing about it was memorable. It took its "fountain of youth" conceit for granted, and the performances were so one-dimensional as to be unintentionally funny. *Love and Curses* took a good concept and good series (*She Wolf of London*) and destroyed both in an overt attempt to be "funny." Over-the-top, smarmy performances, ridiculous stories, and ludicrous special effects turned this once-fine show into a camp disaster.

*The Burning Zone* is not as consistently bad as the other shows on this list, but its last five or six episodes were really terrible, despite some early promise. A gorefest every week, with debilitating diseases being reversed and cured with incredible ease, this series could not survive its lack of believability and hopeless formula (*Outbreak* on a weekly basis.) *The Hitchhiker*, a soft-porn anthology, used sex only to draw in viewers, not to examine sexual morality and dilemmas, and the show miraculously became even worse when it moved to the USA Network from HBO.

The dishonorable mentions on the list are not "bad" so much as they are slow-witted and dull. *Tales of the Unexpected* was a tired anthology with weak stories and slow plotting. *The Next Step Beyond* managed to be drippy-sweet at the same time that it looked cheap and inferior to its source material, *One Step Beyond*. *Charmed* is filled with beautiful people, great clothes, and terrific pop music ... but it is essentially "Witchcraft for Dummies" without any of the wit, intelligence, or likable characters of its obvious (and far superior) model, *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*.

1. *Freddy's Nightmares* (1988-90) (Syndicated)
2. *Stephen King's The Golden Years* (1991) (CBS)
3. *Love and Curses* (1991) (Syndicated)
4. *The Burning Zone* (1996) (UPN)
5. *The Hitchhiker* (1983-91) (HBO/USA)

Dishonorable Mentions: NBC's *Quinn Martin's Tales of the Unexpected* (1977), the syndicated *The Next Step Beyond* (1978), the WB's *Charmed* (1998– )

## ***Appendix E: The Hosts***

A great number of the series documented in this book are anthologies (or semi-anthologies, in the case of *Freddy's Nightmares* and *Nightmare Cafe*). As such, each series features a host/narrator. For the completists, a list of anthology hosts/narrators from 1970 to 1999 is included below.

1. Rod Serling, *Rod Serling's Night Gallery* (1970-73)
2. Sebastian Cabot (as Winston Essex) in *Ghost Story* (1972)
3. Anthony Quayle, *The Evil Touch* (1973)
4. William Conrad, *Quinn Martin's Tales of the Unexpected* (1977)
5. John Newland, *The Next Step Beyond* (1978)
6. Brad Crandall, *Cliffhangers* (1979)
7. James Coburn, *Darkroom* (1981)
8. Nicholas Campbell and Page Fletcher, *The Hitchhiker* (1983-89)
9. Alfred Hitchcock (deceased), *Alfred Hitchcock Presents* (1985-86)
10. Robert Englund (as Fred Krueger), *Freddy's Nightmares* (1988-90)
11. The Cryptkeeper, *Tales from the Crypt* (1989-94)
12. Robert Englund (as Blackie) in *Nightmare Cafe* (1992)

## ***Appendix F: The Partners***

Just as there were many anthology hosts and series in modern terror TV, so are there several shows featuring a set of partners as they pursue evil or the paranormal.

1. Micki (Robey) and Ryan (John LeMay) (and later Steven Monarque as Johnny) in *Friday the 13th: The Series*
2. Ian (Neil Dickson) and Randi (Kate Hodge) in *She Wolf of London/Love and Curses*
3. J.J. Stillman (Carl Marotte) and Laura Wingate (Shari Belafonte) in *Beyond Reality*
4. Nick Knight (Geraint Wyn-Davies) and Schanke (John Kapelos) in *Forever Knight*
5. Fox Mulder (David Duchovny) and Dana Scully (Gillian Anderson) in *The X-Files*
6. John Loengard (Eric Close) and Kim Sayers (Megan Ward) (and then Juliet Stuart [Jeri Ryan]) in *Dark Skies*
7. Frank Black (Lance Henriksen) and Emma Hollis (Klea Scott) in *Millennium*
8. Chandler Smythe (Clayton Rohner) and Henry McNeil (Richard Brooks) in *G vs E*

## ***Appendix G: The Soaps***

Horror fans have seen anthologies and partner shows over the years, but they have also seen series that seem to be descendants of *Peyton Place*, soap operas with horror elements. The horror soaps are listed below.

1. *Twin Peaks* (1990–91)
2. *Stephen King's The Golden Years* (1991)
3. *Dark Shadows* (1991)
4. *American Gothic* (1995)
5. *Kindred: The Embraced* (1996)

## ***Appendix H: The Vampires***

Of all horror “monsters,” vampires seem to be the most endlessly fascinating. Accordingly, vampires have been seen on every show from *Night Gallery* to *The X-Files*. Below is a list of actors and characters who have had starring roles as creatures of the night during the last thirty years. It is interesting to note that Dracula has twice been a “starring” character on television, and in both occasions has been portrayed in tongue-in-cheek fashion.

1. Michael Nouri as Dracula (*Cliffhangers: The Curse of Dracula*)
2. Geordie Johnson as Dracula (*Dracula: The Series*)
3. Ben Cross as Barnabas Collins (*Dark Shadows*)
4. Geraint Wyn-Davies as Nick Knight (*Forever Knight*)
5. Mark Frankel as Julian Luna (*Kindred: The Embraced*)
6. David Boreanaz as Angel (*Buffy the Vampire Slayer/Angel*)



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Abroms, Ed

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*Alien<sup>3</sup>* (film)

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Brendan, Nicholas

Brennert, Alan

Brez, Ethel

Brez, Mel

“The Bribe” (*Tales from the Crypt* episode)

“Bride of the Wolfman” (*Love and Curses* episode)

“The Bride Possessed” (*One Step Beyond* episode)

“The Bride Wore Red” (*Freddy’s Nightmares* episode)

“The Bridge” (*Beyond Reality* episode)

Bridges, James

Bridges, Lloyd

*Brimstone* (TV series)

“Broken World” (*Millennium* episode)

Bronson, Charles

Brooke, Sorrell

Brooks, Martin E.

Brooks, Richard

Brossollet, Martin

“Brother’s Keeper” (*Poltergeist* episode)

Brown, Barry

Brown, Frederic

Brown, Kathie

Brown, Mende

Buchanon, Ian

Buck, Craig

*Buck Rogers in the*

“The Buck Stops Here” (*American Gothic* episode)

Bucksey, Colin

*Buffy the Vampire Slayer* (film)

*Buffy the Vampire Slayer* (TV Series)

*Bug* (film)

“The Bug House” (*Monsters* episode)

Bugajski, Richard

Bull Bua, Gene

Bull Bua, Tony

*Bullwinkle* (TV series)

Bunch, Chris

Burges, Constance

Burgess, Granville

“Buried” (*G vs E* episode)

“Burn, Baby, Burn” (*Dark Skies* episode)

Burnham, Ed

“The Burning Judge” (*Beyond Reality* episode)

*The Burning Zone* (TV series)

Burns, Ed

Burrell, Jan

Burton, Tim

Busey, Gary

“The Butcher” (*Friday the the 13th* episode)

Buttram, Pat

Buzzi, Ruth

Byrne, Johnny



Byrum, John

“Cabin Fever” (*Freddy’s Nightmares* episode)

“Cabin Fever” (*The Hitchhiker* episode)

“Cabin in the Woods” (*Kindred: The Embraced* episode)

Cabot, Sebastian

Caesar, Adolph

Caffey, Michael T.

Calhoun, Rory

Call, R.D.

“The Calusari” (*The X-Files* episode)

Cambridge, Godfrey

“Came the Dawn” (*Tales from the Crypt* episode)

“Camera Obscura” (*Rod Serling’s Night Gallery* episode)

“Campaign ’20” (*The Evil Touch* episode)

Campanella, Joseph

Campbell, April

Campbell, Bruce

Campbell, Neve

Campbell, Nicholas

Campbell, William

Campion, Clifford

“Can a Dead Man Strike from the Grave?” (*The Sixth Sense* episode)

“Canary Sedan” (*The Hitchhiker* episode)

“Candle, Candle, Burning Bright” (*The Sixth Sense* episode)

Cannom, Greg

*Cannon* (TV series)

Cannon, Thomas H.

“Can’t Keep a Dead Man Down” (*She Wolf of London* episode)

“Can’t Run, Can’t Hide” (*Forever Knight* episode)

*Cape Fear* (film)

“Capital Offense” (*Forever Knight* episode)

Cappe, James

*Captains and the Kings* (TV series)

Cardille, Lori

“Career Move” (*Alfred Hitchcock Presents* episode)

Carey, Philip

Carhart, Timothy

*Caribe* (TV series)

Carpenter, Charisma

Carpenter, John

Carradine, David

Carradine, John

Carradine, Robert

Carren, David Bennett

*Carrie* (film)

“Carrier” (*Brimstone* episode)

“Carrion Death” (*Tales from the Crypt* episode)

Carroll, J. Larry

Carson, L.M Kit

Carter, Chris

“The Casavin Curse” (*Tales from the Darkside* episode)

“A Case of the Stubborns” (*Tales from the Darkside* episode)

Casey, Charles R.

Cassar, Jon

Cassavetes, John

Cassidy, David

Cassidy, Jack

Cassidy, Shaun

Castle, William

Castronova, T.J.

*The Cat Creature* (film)

“The Caterpillar” (*Rod Serling’s Night Gallery* episode)

“Catnip” (*Darkroom* episode)

“Caught in the Act” (*Outer Limits* [new] episode)

Cavanaugh, James

Cavanaugh, Michael

CBS

*CBS Friday Night Movie*

“Cellmates” (*Monsters* episode)

“Cemetery” (*Rod Serling’s Night Gallery* episode)

“Certain Shadows on the Wall” (*Rod Serling’s Night Gallery* episode)

Chacon, Christopher

Chambers, John

Chapman, Judith

Chapman, Lonny

Charleston, James

“Charlie X” (*Star Trek* episode)

*Charlie’s Angels* (TV series)

*Charmed* (TV series)

“The Charnel Pit” (*Friday the the 13th* episode)

Charters, Rodney

Chase, David

*Checkmate* (TV series)

Cheever, John

Chen, Joan

Chermak, Cy

“Cherry Blossoms” (*Forever Knight* episode)

Chesler, Lewis

Chetwynd-Hayes, R.B.

Chevely, Roger

“The Children of Spider County” (*Outer Limits* episode)

“Children of the Night” (*Dracula* episode)

“Chinga” (*The X-Files* episode)

“The Choice” (*Poltergeist* episode)

“A Choice of Dreams” (*Tales from the Darkside* episode)

“Choices” (*Buffy the Vampire Slayer* episode)

Chong, Rae Dawn

Chong, Robbi

“Chopper” (*Kolchak: The Night Stalker* episode)

Christian, Shawn

*Christine* (film)

“A Christmas Carol” (*The X-Files* episode)

Chubbock, Lyndon

Ciccoritti, Gerard

*Circle of Fear* (TV series; see also *Ghost Story*)

“The Circus” (*Tales from the Darkside* episode)

“City of” (*Angel* episode)

*City Slickers* (film)

Clark, Candy

Clark, Dennis

“Class of 1999” (*Rod Serling's Night Gallery* episode)

“Clean Kills and Other Trophies” (*Rod Serling's Night Gallery* episode)

Clemens, Brian

Clements, Calvin J.

*Cliffhangers* (TV series; see also *The Curse of Dracula*)

Cloke, Kristen

Close, Eric

“Close Call” (*Forever Knight* episode)

“Closed Circuit” (*Darkroom* episode)

“Closure” (*Millennium* episode)

Clute, Sidney

“Clyde Buckman's Final Repose” (*The X-Files* episode)

“Coach” (*The Hitchhiker* episode)

Coburn, James

Coca, Imogene

Cockrell, Marian

“Cocoon” (*Monsters* episode)

*Cocoon* (film)

“The Code” (*Forever Knight* episode)

“Code Liz” (*The Hitchhiker* episode)

“Coffin, Coffin in the Sky” (*The Sixth Sense* episode)

Cohen, Barney

“The Cold” (*Beyond Reality* episode)

“Cold War” (*Tales from the Crypt* episode)

Cole, Allan

Cole, Gary

Colen, Beatrice

Colicos, John

Colla, Richard

“Collaborations” (*Prey* episode)

“Collateral Damage” (*Millennium* episode)

“Collection Completed” (*Tales from the Crypt* episode)

Collier, John

Collins, Gary

Collins, Robert

Collins, Stephen

“Colony” (*The X-Files* episode)

“Color of Mad” (*Beyond Reality* episode)

“Color Scheme” (*Season to Be Wary* story)

Columbia House

*Combat* (TV series)

Combs, Holly Marie

“Comet Watch” (*Tales from the Darkside* episode)

Conaway, Jeff

“The Concrete Captain” (*Ghost Story* episode)

“Conduit” (*The X-Files* episode)

“The Confession” (*The Next Step Beyond* episode)

“The Confession” (*Tales from the Crypt* episode)

Conniff, Frank

Conrad, William

Connors, Chuck

Connors, Mike

Conreid, Hans

“Consequences” (*Buffy the Vampire Slayer* episode)

Constantine, Michael

*Contact* (film)

Contner, James

“Conversation Over a Corpse” (*Alfred Hitchcock Presents* episode)

Converse, Frank

Convy, Bert

Cook, Oscar

Cook, R.C.

Cooke, Jennifer

“Cool Air” (*Rod Serling’s Night Gallery* episode)

Coon, Gene

Cooper, Basil

Coopersmith, Jerome

Corbett, Glen

Corcoran, Bill

Cord, Alex

Cordell, Cathleen

Corey, Jeff

Cormack, Lynne

*The Cosby Show* (TV series)

*Cosmos* (TV series)

Coto, Manny

Coulson, Catherine

Coulter, Allen

Courtois, Miguel

“Coven of Darkness” (*Friday the the 13th* episode)

“Covenant” (*Poltergeist* episode)

Cox, Ronny

Cox, Wally

Coyote, Peter

*Crackle of Death* (*Kolchak: The Night Stalker* compilation movie; see also “Firefall” and “The Energy Eater”)

*The Craft* (film)

Craig, Charles Grant

Craig, Yvonne

Crandall, Brad

Crane, Norma



Crane, Peter

Craven, Wes

Crawford, Joan

*The Creature from the Black Lagoon* (film)

“Creatures of the Canyon” (*Ghost Story* episode)

“Creep Course” (*Tales from the Crypt* episode)

“The Creeper” (*Alfred Hitchcock Presents* episode)

*Creepshow* (film)

*Creepshow*

“Crippled Inside” (*Friday the the 13th* episode)

“Critical Mass” (*The Burning Zone* episode)

*Critters* (film)

Cronenberg, David

Crosby, Cathy Lee

Crosland, Alan

Cross, Ben

Crothers, Scatman

Crowe, Christopher

Crowley, Pat

“The Cruellest Cut” (*The Hitchhiker* episode)

“Cry Baby” (*The Next Step Beyond* episode)

“Cry of the Cat” (*Ghost Story* episode)

Crystal, Billy

“Crystal Scarab” (*Poltergeist* episode)

*Cujo* (film)

Cullen, William

Cummins, Martin

Cunningham, Sean

“A Cup of Time” (*Friday the the 13th* episode)

“Cupid’s Quiver” (*Friday the the 13th* episode)

“Curiouser and Curiouser” (*Forever Knight* episode)

“Curiosity Killed” (*Tales from the Crypt* episode)

“Curiosity Killed the Cravitz” (*Love and Curses* episode)

“The Curse” (*The Hitchhiker* episode)

*The Curse of Dracula* (TV series; see also *Cliffhangers*)

“The Curse of Frank Black” (*Millennium* episode)

Curtis, Dan

“Cutting Cards” (*Tales from the Crypt*)

“The Cutty Black Sow” (*Tales from the Darkside* episode)

Dafoe, Willem

Dahl, Roald

“Daisies” (*Darkroom* episode)

Dalen, Zale

*Dallas* (TV series)

Dallesandro, Joe

Dalton, Timothy

Daly, James

Daly, Tyne

“Damned If You Don’t” (*American Gothic* episode)

“Damsel in Distress” (*Dracula* episode)

Damski, Mel

“Dance by the Light of the Moon” (*Forever Knight* episode)

“Dancing with the Man” (*Beyond Reality* episode)

Daniels, Norman

Daniels, William

Danning, Sybil

Dano, Royal

Danova, Cesare

Dante, Joe

Darabone, Frank

D’Arbanville, Patti

Darby, Kim

Darden, Severn

“The Dark Age” (*Buffy the Vampire Slayer* episode)

“Dark Angel” (*Poltergeist* episode)

“The Dark Boy” (*Rod Serling’s Night Gallery* episode)

“Dark Day’s Night” (*Dark Skies* episode)

“Dark Knight” (*Forever Knight* episode)

“Dark Priest” (*Poltergeist* episode)

“The Dark Room” (*One Step Beyond* episode)

*Dark Shadows* (TV series/original)

*Dark Shadows* (TV series/re-make)

*Dark Skies* (TV series)

“Dark Vengeance” (*Circle of Fear* episode)

“Dark Wishes” (*The Hitchhiker* episode)

*Darkest Africa* (film)

“Darkness Falls” (*Poltergeist* episode)

“Darkness Falls” (*The X-Files* episode)

*Darkroom* (TV series)

Darren, Christian

Darren, James

Darrid, William

Darrin, Bobby

Darrow, Henry

“Darwin’s Eye” (*Millennium* episode)

Datcher, Alex

Daugherty, Herschel

David, Majorie

Davis, Don S.

Davis, Gerry

Davis, Glenn

Davis, Ossie

Davis, Robin

Davis, Sammy, Jr.

Davis, William B.

Davison, Bruce

*Dawn of the Dead* (film)

*Dawson’s Creek* (TV series)

Day, Robert

*Day of the Dead* (film)

“The Day the World Wept” (*One Step Beyond* episode)

Deacon, Richard

“Dead Air” (*Beyond Reality* episode)

“Dead Air” (*Forever Knight* episode)

*Dead at 21*

*Dead Calm* (film)

*The Dead Don't Die* (telefilm)

“Dead Heat” (*The Hitchhiker* episode)

“Dead Issue” (*Forever Knight* episode)

“Dead Letters” (*Millennium* episode)

“The Dead Man” (*Rod Serling's Night Gallery* episode)

“Dead Man Dating” (*Charmed* episode)

“Dead Man's Curve” (*The Hitchhiker* episode)

“Dead Man's Party” (*Buffy the Vampire Slayer* episode)

“Dead of Night” (*Forever Knight* episode)

“Dead Right” (*Tales from the Crypt* episode)

“Dead to the World” (*American Gothic* episode)

“Dead Wait” (*Tales from the Crypt* episode)

“The Dead We Leave Behind” (*Ghost Story* episode)

“Dead Weight” (*Rod Serling's Night Gallery* episode)

“Deadline” (*Freddy's Nightmares* episode)

“Deadline” (*Tales from the Crypt* episode)

*Deadly Blessing* (film)

“Deadly Honeymoon” (*Alfred Hitchcock Presents* episode)

“The Deal” (*Tales from the Darkside* episode)

“Dear Beloved Monster” (*The Evil Touch* episode)

“Dear Cora, I’m Going to Kill You” (*The Evil Touch* episode)

“The Dear Departed” (*Rod Serling’s Night Gallery* episode)

“Dear Joan, We Are Going to Scare You to Death” (*The Sixth Sense* episode)

“Death by Dreaming” (*The Evil Touch* episode)

“A Death in the Family” (*Rod Serling’s Night Gallery* episode)

“Death of Some Salesman” (*Tales from the Crypt* episode)

“Death on a Barge” (*Rod Serling’s Night Gallery* episode)

“Death Song” (*The Burning Zone* episode)

“Death’s Head” (*Circle of Fear* episode)

de Boer, Nikki

De Bont, Jan

“Debt of Honor” (*Poltergeist* episode)

“Decline of the Romanian Vampire” (*Dracula* episode)

*Deconstructing Harry* (film)

Dee, Sandra

*Deep Impact* (film)

“Deep Throat” (*The X-Files* episode)

De Guere, Phil

Dehner, John

“Déjà Vu All Over Again” (*Charmed* episode)

De Jarnatt, Steve

Dekker, Fred

De Laurentiis, Robert

de Lint, Derek

*Deliverance* (film)

“Deliverance” (*Prey* episode)

De Luca, Michael

“Demon Hunter” (*Friday the the 13th* episode)

“Demon and the Mummy” (*Kolchak: The Night Stalker* compilation film; *see also* “Demon in Lace” and “Legacy of Terror”)

“Demon in Lace” (*Kolchak: The Night Stalker* episode)

“Demon in the Flame” (*Beyond Reality* episode)

“Demons” (*Monsters* episode)

“Demons” (*The X-Files* episode)

“Demons of the Dark” (*Curse of Dracula* chapter)

Dennehy, Brian

Denisof, Alexis

Densham, Pen

DePalma, Brian

DePalma, Frank

Derleth, August

De Rosso, H.A.

Deschanel, Caleb

“Desirable Alien” (*Monsters* episode)

De Souza, Steven

“Detour” (*The X-Files* episode)

“The Devil Is Not Mocked” (*Rod Serling’s Night Gallery* episode)

“Devil Pack” (*Quinn Martin’s Tales of the Unexpected* episode)

“Devil’s Advocate” (*Tales from the Darkside* episode)

“The Devil’s Lighthouse” (*Poltergeist* episode)

“The Devil’s Platform” (*Kolchak: The Night Stalker* episode)

De Wilde, Brandon

Dey, Susan

*Diagnosis Murder* (TV series)

“Diamonds Aren’t Forever” (*Alfred Hitchcock Presents* episode)

“The Diary” (*Rod Serling’s Night Gallery* episode)

Dickinson, Angie

Dickson, Neil

“Die Hand der Verletzt” (*The X-Files* episode)

“Die Now, Pay Later” (*Rod Serling’s Night Gallery* episode)

“The Different Ones” (*Rod Serling’s Night Gallery* episode)

*Diff’rent Strokes* (TV series)

“Dig that Cat ... He’s Real Gone” (*Tales from the Crypt* episode)

Di Leo Mario

Diller, Phyllis

Dillman, Bradford

“Discovery” (*Prey* episode)

Disher, Catherine

“Distant Signals” (*Tales from the Darkside* episode)

Di Tillio, Lawrence

Dixon, Glenn

Dixon, Peter L.

“D’jinn, No Chaser” (*Tales from the Darkside* episode)

“Do Dreams Bleed?” (*Freddy’s Nightmares* episode)

“Do Not Go Gently” (*Poltergeist* episode)



“Do Not Open the Box” (*Tales from the Darkside* episode)

“Do You Know Where Your Kids Are?” (*Freddy’s Nightmares* episode)

“Doctor Death Takes a Holiday” (*American Gothic* episode)

“Doctor Jack” (*Friday the the 13th* episode)

“Doctor of Horror” (*Tales from the Crypt* episode)

“Dr. McDermitt’s New Patients” (*The Evil Touch* episode)

*Dr. Shrinker* (TV series)

*Dr. Simon Locke* (TV series)

“Dr. Stringfellow’s Rejuvenator” (*Rod Serling’s Night Gallery* episode)

*The Doctors* (TV series)

*Doctors Hospital* (TV series)

“Doctor’s Orders” (*The Hitchhiker* episode)

“Dod Kalm” (*The X-Files* episode)

Doherty, Shannen

“The Doll” (*Rod Serling’s Night Gallery* episode)

“The Doll of Death” (*Rod Serling’s Night Gallery* episode)

*Dolores Claiborne* (film)

Doninger, Walt

Donner, Richard

Donovan, King

*Don’t Be Afraid of the Dark* (TV movie)

“Don’t Sell Yourself Short” (*Alfred Hitchcock Presents*)

Dooley, Paul

*The Doomsday Flight* (TV movie)

“Doorway to Death” (*Circle of Fear* episode)

“Doorway to Hell” (*Friday the the 13th* episode)

“The Doppelganger” (*Beyond Reality* episode)

“Doppelganger” (*Poltergeist* episode)

“Doppelgangland” (*Buffy the Vampire Slayer* episode)

Dorn, Rudi

Dotrice, Roy

“Double Cross” (*Dracula* episode)

“Double Darkness” (*Dracula* episode)

“Double Exposure” (*Friday the the 13th* episode)

*Double Play* (TV special)

Douglas, Melvyn

Douglas, Michael

Dourif, Brad

*Down and Out in Beverly Hills* (TV series)

“D.P.O” (*The X-Files* episode)

*Dracula* (telefilm)

*Dracula: The Series* (TV series)

*Dracula '79*

Drago, Billy

“Dragon’s Domain” (*Space: 1999* episode)

Drake, Larry

“The Dream” (*One Step Beyond* episode)

“Dream Come True” (*Freddy’s Nightmares* episode)

“Dream Girl” (*Tales from the Darkside* episode)

“Dream Lover” (*Poltergeist* episode)

“Dream of Disaster” (*The Next Step Beyond* episode)

“Dream Sorcerer” (*Charmed* episode)

“Dreamland” (*Dark Skies* episode)

“Dreamland” (*The X-Files* episode)

“Dreams That Kill” (*Freddy’s Nightmares* episode)

Dreier, Alex

Dresner, Hal

“Drive” (*The X-Files* episode)

“Drums at Midnight” (*The Next Step Beyond* episode)

Drury, John

“Duane Barry” (*The X-Files* episode)

Dubin, Charles

Duchene, Deborah

Duchovny, David

*Due South* (TV series)

Duff, Howard

Dugan, Dennis

Dugan, John T.

Duke, Daryl

Duke, Patty

*Dukes of Hazzard* (TV series)

*Dune* (film)

Dunn, Michael

Duquary, Christian

Durand, Mark

Dusay, Marj

Dushku, Eliza

“Dust” (*Twilight Zone* episode)

“Dust to Dust” (*Freddy’s Nightmares* episode)

Duvall, Shelley

“Dying for Fame” (*Forever Knight* episode)

“Dying Generation” (*The Hitchhiker* episode)

“Dying of the Light” (*Beyond Reality* episode)

“Dying to Know You” (*Forever Knight* episode)

“Dying Well Is the Best Revenge” (*Nightmare Cafe* episode)

“Ear Today, Gone Tomorrow” (*Tales from the Crypt* episode)

Earll, Robert

“Earshot” (*Buffy the Vampire Slayer* episode)

“Earth, Air, Fire and Water” (*Circle of Fear* episode)

*Earth: Final Conflict* (TV series)

“Easel Kill Ya” (*Tales from the Crypt* episode)

Eastlake, Carleton

Eastman, Allan

“Easy Come, Easy Go” (*Freddy’s Nightmares* episode)

“E.B.E.” (*The X-Files* episode)

Ebert, Roger

Ebson, Buddy

E.C. Comics

“Echo of a Distant Scream” (*The Sixth Sense* episode)

“Echo of Your Last Goodbye” (*American Gothic* episode)

“Echoes of Evil” (*Beyond Reality* episode)

“Eclipse” (*Love and Curses* episode)

Edelman, Scott

Eggar, Samantha

Egoyan, Atom

*Eight Is Enough* (TV series)

*87th Precinct* (TV series)

“El Mundo Gira” (*The X-Files* episode)

Elcar, Dana

“Electrocutioner” (*Friday the the 13th* episode)

“Elegy” (*The X-Files* episode)

“Elegy for a Dream” (*The Burning Zone* episode)

“Elegy for a Vampire” (*Ghost Story* episode)

Elfman, Danny

Ellin, Stanley

Ellis, Sidney

Ellison, Harlan

Elman, Irving

Ely, David

“The Embraced” (*Kindred: The Embraced* pilot)

Emerson, Ralph Waldo

“Emily” (*The X-Files* episode)

*The Empire Strikes Back* (film)

“Encore” (*Brimstone* episode)

“End Game” (*The X-Files* episode)

“End of the World” (*Freddy’s Nightmares* episode)

“Enemies” (*Buffy the Vampire Slayer* episode)

“Enemy in Our Midst” (*Beyond Reality* episode)

“The Energy Eater” (*Kolchak: The Night Stalker* episode)

Engels, Robert

“The Enlightened One” (*Poltergeist* episode)

Englund, Robert

“The Enormous Radio” (*Tales from the Darkside* episode)

“Enough Rope for Two” (*Alfred Hitchcock Presents* episode)

*Entertainment Tonight*

“Epitaph for a Lonely Soul” (*Friday the the 13th* episode)

*Eraserhead* (film)

Erickson, Leif

“The Erlenmeyer Flask” (*The X-Files* episode)

“Errand of Mercy” (*Star Trek* episode)

Erwin, Lee

Erwin, Terry

*Escape* (TV series)

“Escape” (*Tales from the Crypt* episode)

“Escape Route” (*Rod Serling’s Night Gallery* episode)

Estrada, Eric

Estrin, Zack

“Eternity” (*Angel* episode)

Evans, Maurice

“Eve” (*The X-Files* episode)

Eve, Trevor

“Everybody Needs a Little Love” (*Tales from the Darkside* episode)

Evigan, Greg

*The Evil Dead* (film)

*Evil Dead*

*The Evil Touch* (TV series)

“Evilator” (*G vs E* episode)

“Excelsius Dei” (*The X-Files* episode)

“Executioner” (*Brimstone* episode)

“Exegesis” (*Millennium* episode)

“Existence” (*Prey* episode)

“Exit Line” (*Darkroom* episode)

*The Exorcist* (film)

“Expecting” (*Angel* episode)

*The Explorers* (TV series)

“Eye of Death” (*Friday the the 13th* episode)

“Eye of the Beholder” (*American Gothic* episode)

“Eye of the Beholder” (*Twilight Zone* episode)

“Eye of the Haunted” (*The Sixth Sense* episode)

“Eye of the Storm” (*Werewolf* episode)

“Eyes” (*Rod Serling’s Night Gallery* episode)

*Eyes of Laura Mars* (film)

“Eyes That Would Not Die” (*The Sixth Sense* episode)

“F. Emasculata” (*The X-Files* episode)

*F-Troop* (TV series)

“Face of Death” (*Friday the the 13th* episode)

“Face of Ice” (*The Sixth Sense* episode)

“Face Off” (*Beyond Reality* episode)

“Face to Face” (*The Hitchhiker* episode)

“Faces” (*Brimstone* episode)

“Faces in the Night” (*The Burning Zone* episode)

“Facing the Wall” (*Beyond Reality* episode)

Factor, Alan Jay

*Facts of Life* (TV series)

“Fading Away” (*The Hitchhiker* episode)

Fahey, Jeff

Faison, Frankie

“Faith Healer” (*Friday the the 13th* episode)

“Faith, Hope and Trick” (*Buffy the Vampire Slayer* episode)

“Faithful Followers” (*Forever Knight* episode)

“Fallen Angel” (*Poltergeist* episode)

“Fallen Angel” (*The X-Files* episode)

“Fallen Idol” (*Forever Knight* episode)

“The False Prophet” (*Tales from the Darkside* episode)

“False Witness” (*Forever Knight* episode)

*Family Affair* (TV series)

*The Family Holvak* (TV series)

“The Family Man” (*Monsters* episode)

“Family Reunion” (*Tales from the Darkside* episode)

“The Fans” (*The Evil Touch* episode)



*The Fantastic Journey* (TV series)

“Far Below” (*Monsters* episode)

Farentino, James

Farley, Morgan

“Farmer’s Daughter” (*Monsters* episode)

Farr, Gordon

Farr, Jamie

Farrell, Brioni

Farrell, Mike

Farrell, Sharon

Farrow, Mia

*Farscape* (TV series)

“Fashion Exchange” (*The Hitchhiker* episode)

*Fatal Attraction* (film)

“Fatal Caper” (*Tales from the Crypt* episode)

“Fatal Mistake” (*Forever Knight* episode)

“A Fate Worse Than Death” (*Forever Knight* episode)

“Father Figure” (*Forever Knight* episode)

“Father Image” (*One Step Beyond* episode)

“Father to Son” (*Poltergeist* episode)

“Father’s Day” (*Forever Knight* episode)

“Faulkner’s Choice” (*The Evil Touch* episode)

“Faye and Ivy” (*Nightmare Cafe* episode)

“Fear” (*Poltergeist* episode)

“Fear of Floating” (*Tales from the Darkside* episode)

“A Fear of Spiders” (*Rod Serling’s Night Gallery* episode)

“Fearful Symmetry” (*The X-Files* episode)

Fearnley, Neill

“A Feast of Blood” (*Rod Serling’s Night Gallery* episode)

“Feats of Clay” (*Charmed* episode)

“Feeding the Beast” (*Forever Knight* episode)

Feke, Steve

*Felicity* (TV series)

“Femme Fatale” (*Friday the the 13th* episode)

Fenn, Sherilyn

Ferdin, Pamela

Ferrar, Catherine

Ferrer, Miguel

“The Fever” (*Forever Knight* episode)

“The Feverman” (*Monsters* episode)

Fiedler, John

Field, Sally

“Field Trip” (*The X-Files* episode)

“The Field Where I Died” (*The X-Files* episode)

Fielding, Jerry

Fields, Peter Allan

Filippo, Fab

“The Final Chapter” (*Quinn Martin’s Tales of the Unexpected* episode)

“Final Escape” (*Alfred Hitchcock Presents* episode)

“Final Flight” (*Beyond Reality* episode)

Fincher, David

“Finding Richter” (*Poltergeist* episode)

Fink, Kenneth

“Finnegan’s Flight” (*Rod Serling’s Night Gallery* episode)

Finnerman, Gerald Perry

Fiorentino, Linda

“Fire” (*The X-Files* episode)

“The Fire Inside” (*Forever Knight* episode)

“The Fire Within” (*Beyond Reality* episode)

“Firefall” (*Kolchak: The Night Stalker* episode)

“Firewalker” (*The X-Files* episode)

*First Wave* (TV series)

Fischer, Peter S.

Fisher, Michael

Fisher, Steve

“Fitting Punishment” (*Tales from the Crypt* episode)

“Five by Five” (*Angel* episode)

“Five Widows Weeping” (*The Sixth Sense* episode)

“The Fix” (*Forever Knight* episode)

Flanagan, Fionnula

*Flash Gordon* (film)

*Flash Gordon* (film [1980])

Flender, Rodman

Fletcher, Louise

Fletcher, Page

Flicker, Theodore

“The Flip Side of Satan” (*Rod Serling’s Night Gallery* episode)

“Florence Bravo” (*Tales from the Darkside* episode)

*Flowers in the Attic* (film)

“The Flying Sepulcher of Death” (*The Sixth Sense* episode)

Foch, Nina

“Fogbound” (*Alfred Hitchcock Presents* episode)

Fontana, Dorothy

“Food for Thought” (*Tales from the Crypt* episode)

“For Art’s Sake” (*Alfred Hitchcock Presents* episode)

“For Cryin’ Out Loud” (*Tales from the Crypt* episode)

“For I Have Sinned” (*Forever Knight* episode)

“Force Majeure” (*Millennium* episode)

“The Force of Evil” (*Quinn Martin’s Tales of the Unexpected* episode)

“Force of Life” (*Space: 1999* episode)

“Forcing the End” (*Millennium* episode)

*Ford Theater*

Forest, Denis

“Forever Ambergris” (*Tales from the Crypt* episode)

*Forever Knight* (TV series)

“Forget Me Not” (*Beyond Reality* episode)

“Forked Lightning” (*One Step Beyond* episode)

Forrest, Steve

Forster, Robert

“Forward into the Past” (*Forever Knight* episode)

Foster, Jodie

Foster, Meg

*Four In One* (TV omnibus)

Fournier, Jean-Vincent

“The Fourth Horseman” (*Millennium* episode)

“The Fourth Sister” (*Charmed* episode)

Fox, Colin

Fox, John J.

Fox, Michael J.

Fox Network

“Fox Spirit” (*Poltergeist* episode)

Foxworth, Robert

“Francesca” (*Forever Knight* episode)

Franciosa, Tony

Francis, Ivor

Franciscus, James

Frankel, Mark

Franken, Steve

Franklin, Max

Franklin, Pamela

Frann, Mary

*Freddy’s Nightmares* (TV series)

*Free Spirit* (TV series)

Freedman, Jerrold

“Fresh Bones” (*The X-Files* episode)

Frewer, Matt

Frid, Jonathan

*Friday the the 13th* (film)

*Friday the 13th: The Series* (TV Series)

*Friday the 13th Part II* (film)

*Friday the 13th Part III in 3D* (film)

*Friday the 13th Part IV: The Final Chapter* (film)

*Friday the 13th Part V: A New Beginning* (film)

*Friday the 13th Part VI: Jason Lives* (film)

*Friday the 13th Part VII: A New Blood* (film)

*Friday the 13th Part VIII: Jason Takes Manhattan* (film)

Friedkin, William

Friedman, Brent V.

Friedman, Richard

“A Friend to the End” (*Friday the the 13th* episode)

*Friends* (TV series)

*Fright Night* (film)

“Fright Night” (*Rod Serling’s Night Gallery* episode)

Froelich, William

“From Fear to Eternity” (*Charmed* episode)

Frost, Mark

Fruet, William

*The Fugitive* (TV series)

*Full Metal Jacket* (film)

Fullilove, Eric

“A Function of Control” (*The Hitchhiker* episode)

“The Funeral” (*Rod Serling’s Night Gallery* episode)

Furth, George

*G vs E* (TV series)

Gabor, Zsa Zsa

Gaghan, Stephen

Gaines, Bill

*Galactica*

Gale, Bob

Galfas, Timothy

Galin, Mitchell

Gallagher, Megan

Galligan, Zach

Gallo, Guy

“Gallows in the Wind” (*The Sixth Sense* episode)

“A Game of Hearts” (*The Evil Touch* episode)

“Games Vampires Play” (*Forever Knight* episode)

Gamson, Mitchell

*Gangster Chronicles* (TV series)

Gansa, Alex

Gantillon, Bruno

Garcia, Andy

Garrett, Leif

Garris, Mick

“Garter Belt” (*The Hitchhiker* episode)

Gary, Lorraine

“Gaslight” (*Poltergeist* episode)

Gautier, Dick

Gedrick, Jason

“Gee Your Hair Smells Evil” (*G vs E* episode)

Geer, Will

“Gehenna” (*Millennium* episode)

Geiger, Milton

Gellar, Sarah Michelle

“Genderbender” (*The X-Files* episode)

*General Hospital* (TV series)

*Genesis II* (TV pilot)

“George” (*The Evil Touch* episode)

Gerard, Bernard

Gerard, Merwin

Germano, Peter

Gerrold, David

Gershuny, Ted

“Get a Job” (*Dracula* episode)

*Get Christie Love* (TV series)

“Gethsemane” (*The X-Files* episode)

“Ghost in the Machine” (*The X-Files* episode)

“Ghost in the Road” (*Poltergeist* episode)

“Ghost of Cellblock Two” (*The Next Step Beyond* episode)

“The Ghost of Potter’s Field” (*Circle of Fear* episode)



“The Ghost of Sorworth Place” (*Rod Serling’s Night Gallery* episode)

*Ghost Story/Circle of Fear* (TV series)

“Ghost Town” (*The Next Step Beyond* episode)

“Ghost Train” (*Amazing Stories* episode)

“Ghostwriter” (*The Hitchhiker* episode)

Gibson, William

Gierasch, Stefan

“The Gift” (*Monsters* episode)

“Gigolo” (*Alfred Hitchcock Presents* episode)

Gilligan, Vince

*Gilligan’s Island* (TV series)

Gillum, Vern

Gilmer, Robert

“Gingerbread” (*Buffy the Vampire Slayer* episode)

Girard, Bernard

“Girl with the Hungry Eyes” (*Rod Serling’s Night Gallery* episode)

Glaize, Gail

Glaser, Michael

Glass, Paul

Glass, Robert

Glassner, Jonathan

Glatzer, Lesli Linka

Glenn, Scott

Gless, Sharon

“Glim-Glim” (*Monsters* episode)

“The Gloating Place” (*Alfred Hitchcock Presents* episode)

Glouner, Richard

Glover, John

Glynn, Neva Carr

“Go Fish” (*Buffy the Vampire Slayer* episode)

Goddard, Mark

*The Godfather* (film)

Goethels, Robert

Going, Joanna

“Going Native” (*Tales from the Darkside* episode)

Goldberg, Lee

Goldberg, Mel

Goldenberg, Billy

Golod, Jerry

Gomberg, Sy

“Goodbye, Charlie” (*Millennium* episode)

“Goodbye, Grandpa” (*One Step Beyond* episode)

“Goodbye to All This” (*Millennium* episode)

Goodeve, Grant

Goodwin, R.W.

*Goodyear TV Playhouse* (TV series)

*Goosebumps* (TV series)

Gordon, Howard

“Gornak’s Prism” (*The Evil Touch* episode)

Gornick, Michael

Gorshin, Frank

Gorski, Tamara

Goulart, Ron

Gould, Elliott

“Graduation Day” (*Buffy the Vampire Slayer* episode)

Graham, Heather

“Grandma’s Last Wish” (*Tales from the Darkside* episode)

Grant, Brian

Grant, Charles L.

Grasshoff, Alex

Grauman, Walter

*The Grave* (film)

“The Grave Robber” (*Tales from the Darkside* episode)

Graves, Theresa

“The Graveyard Shift” (*Circle of Fear* episode)

Gray, Dulcie

Gray, Erin

Gray, Nicholas J.

Gray, William

“Gray Wolf” (*Werewolf* episode)

Grean, Wendy

“The Great Montarro” (*Friday the the 13th* episode)

“The Great Tickler” (*Dracula* episode)

*The Greatest American Hero* (TV series)

“Greed” (*The Next Step Beyond* episode)

Green, Bruce Seth

Green, Seth

Green, Sparkey

“Green Fingers” (*Rod Serling’s Night Gallery* episode)

Greenwalt, David

Greenwood, Bruce

Greer, Dabbs

“The Greezenstacks” (*Tales from the Darkside* episode)

Gregg, Virginia

Gregory, Dorian

Gregory, James

Gress, Googy

Grey, Joel

Griffith, Melanie

Grillo-Marxuach, Javier

Grinnage, Jack

Groener, Harry

Groom, Sam

“Grotesque” (*The X-Files* episode)

Grubb, David

Guardino, Harry

“Guillotine” (*Darkroom* episode)

Guinee, Tim

*Gulliver’s Travels* (novel)

*Gun* (TV series)

*Gunsmoke* (TV series)

Guss, Jack

“Habeas Corpses” (*Love and Curses* episode)

Haberman, Don

“Habitat” (*Monsters* episode)

Hagman, Larry

Haid, Charles

Haiduk, Stacy

Haig, Sid

Haines, Randa

Haines, William

Hale, William

“Half a Death” (*Ghost Story* episode)

“Half as Old as Time” (*Monsters* episode)

“Half-Way Horrible” (*Tales from the Crypt* episode)

Hall, Albert

Hall, Arsenio

Hall, Grayson

Hall, Matthew

Hall, Stephen

“Hall of the Serpent” (*The Burning Zone* episode)

Haller, Daniel

“Halloween” (*Buffy the Vampire Slayer* episode)

*Halloween II* (film)

*Halloween IV: The Return of Michael Myers* (film)

*Halloween V: The Revenge of Michael Myers* (film)

“Halloween Candy” (*Tales from the Darkside* episode)

Hamill, Mark

Hamilton, Margaret

Hamilton, Murray

Hamlin, Harry

Hammer, Robert

“A Hand for Sonny Blue” (*Quinn Martin’s Tales of the Unexpected* episode)

“The Hand of Borgus Weems” (*Rod Serling’s Night Gallery* episode)

*The Hand of Orlac* (film)

“The Hand of St. Sebastian” (*Millennium* episode)

“The Hand That Wouldn’t Behave” (short story)

Hanks, Tom

Hannigan, Alyson

“Happy Birthday” (*Alfred Hitchcock Presents* episode)

*Happy Days* (TV series)

“Happy New Year, Aunt Carrie” (*The Evil Touch* episode)

Harbinson, Patrick

“Hard Rhyme” (*The Hitchhiker* episode)

Hardin, Jerry

Harmon, David P.

Harper, Jessica

Harrington, Curtis

Harrington, Pat

Harris, Danielle

Harris, Jonathan

Harris, Julie

Harris, Michael

Harrison, John

Harry, Deborah

*Harry O* (TV series)

*Harsh Realm* (TV series)

Hart, Melissa Joan

Hartley, Mariette

Hartman, Lisa

Hartman, Shelly

Harvey, Laurence

Hasselhoff, David

Hatch, Richard

“Hate on Your Dial” (*Friday the the 13th* episode)

“Hatred Unto Death” (*Rod Serling’s Night Gallery* episode)

“The Haunted Inn” (*The Next Step Beyond*)

*The Haunting* (film/remake)

Hayes, Helen

Hayes, Kathryn

Hayward, Louis

HBO

Head, Anthony Stewart

“Heart Attack” (*Love and Curses* episode)

“The Heart of the Mystery” (*Nightmare Cafe* episode)

“The Heart That Wouldn’t Stay Buried” (*The Sixth Sense* episode)

“Heart to Heart” (*The Evil Touch* episode)

“Heartbreak Hotel” (*Freddy’s Nightmares* episode)

“Hearts of Darkness” (*Forever Knight* episode)

“Heat” (*Brimstone* episode)

Hedden, Rob

Hedges, Michael

Hedison, Alexandra

Hedren, Tippi

“Hell Hath No Fury” (*Poltergeist* episode)

“Hell Money” (*The X-Files* episode)

“Hellowe’en” (*Friday the the 13th* episode)

“Hell’s Bells” (*Rod Serling’s Night Gallery* episode)

“Helpless” (*Buffy the Vampire Slayer* episode)

Hemecker, Ralph

Hemmings, David

Henderson, Zenna

Henriksen, Lance

Henshaw, Jim

Henry, Buck

Henry, Gregg

“Her Finest Hour” (*The Hitchhiker* episode)

“Heretic” (*Tales from the Darkside* episode)

Hermann, Bernard

“Hero” (*Angel* episode)



“Herrenvolk” (*The X-Files* episode)

Hershey, Barbara

Hertzog, Lawrence

Hessler, Gordon

Hickey, William

Hicks, Catherine

*Highlander* (TV series)

Hill, Walter

*Hill Street Blues* (TV series)

Hillerman, John

*The Hills Have Eyes* (film)

Hindle, Art

“Hippocratic Oath” (*Alfred Hitchcock Presents*)

“Hired Help” (*The Hitchhiker* episode)

Hirsch, James

“Hit and Run” (*The Hitchhiker* episode)

Hitchcock, Alfred

*The Hitchhiker* (TV series)

Hoch, Edward

Hodge, Kate

Hodges, Michael

Hogan, Robert

“The Hole” (*Monsters* episode)

Holland, Kristina

Holland, Tom

Hollander, Steven

“Holly’s House” (*Monsters* episode)

“Home” (*The X-Files* episode)

“Homebodies” (*The Hitchhiker* episode)

“Homecoming” (*Buffy the Vampire Slayer* episode)

“The Homecoming” (*The Evil Touch* episode)

Homeier, Skip

Hooper, Tobe

“Hootch” (*The Hitchhiker* episode)

Hopkins, Stephen

“Horror in the Heights” (*Kolchak: The Night Stalker* episode)

“Horror in the Night” (*Tales from the Crypt* episode)

Horton, Peter

Horvath, Gillian

“The Host” (*The X-Files* episode)

“Hostile Convergence” (*Dark Skies* episode)

“Hostile Takeover” (*Monsters* episode)

Houghton, James

“The House” (*Rod Serling’s Night Gallery* episode)

“House—With Ghost” (*Rod Serling’s Night Gallery* episode)

*House of Dark Shadows* (film)

“House of Evil” (*Ghost Story* episode)

“House of Horror” (*Tales from the Crypt* episode)

*The House on Haunted Hill* (film)

“The House That Cried Murder” (*The Sixth Sense* episode)

“Household Gods” (*Monsters* episode)

“The Housekeeper” (*Rod Serling’s Night Gallery* episode)

“How the Ghosts Stole Christmas” (*The X-Files* episode)

“How to Cure the Common Vampire” (*Rod Serling’s Night Gallery* episode)

Howard, Clark

Howard, Clint

Howard, Ken

Howard, Matthew

Howard, Susan

Howarth, Roger

Howell, C. Thomas

*The Howling* (film)

Huddleston, David

Huff, John

Huffman, Felicity

Hughes, Barnard

Hughes, Finola

“Human Essence” (*Millennium* episode)

“The Human Factor” (*Forever Knight* episode)

“The Human Interest Story” (*Alfred Hitchcock Presents* episode)

“The Human Vessel” (*Poltergeist* episode)

*Humanoids from the Deep* (film)

“Humbug” (*The X-Files* episode)

Hunt, Helen

“Hunted” (*Forever Knight* episode)

Hunter, Kim

Hunter, Tab

Hunter, Tim

“Hunters” (*Forever Knight* episode)

Huntington, Joan

Huston, John

Hutchison, Doug

Hutton, Lauren

Hylands, Scott

“I Did Not Mean to Slay Thee” (*The Sixth Sense* episode)

“I Do Not Belong to the Human World” (*The Sixth Sense* episode)

*I Dream of Jeannie* (TV series)

“I Fall to Pieces” (*Angel* episode)

*I Know What You Did Last Summer* (film)

“I Love Lucard” (*Dracula* episode)

“I Only Have Eyes for You” (*Buffy the Vampire Slayer* episode)

“I Robot, You Jane” (*Buffy the Vampire Slayer* episode)

*I Was A Teenage Werewolf* (film)

“I Will Remember You” (*Angel* episode)

“I Will Repay” (*Forever Knight* episode)

“Ice” (*The X-Files* episode)

“If I Should Die Before I Wake” (*The Sixth Sense* episode)

“If Looks Could Kill” (*Alfred Hitchcock Presents* episode)

“If Looks Could Kill” (*Forever Knight* episode)

“If the Shoe Fits” (*Alfred Hitchcock Presents* episode)

“If the Shoe Fits” (*Tales from the Darkside* episode)

“I’ll Give You a Million” (*Tales from the Darkside* episode)

“I’ll Never Leave You—Ever” (*Rod Serling’s Night Gallery* episode)

*The Immortal* (TV series)

“The Impatient Patient” (*Alfred Hitchcock Presents* episode)

“The Impressionist” (*Tales from the Darkside* episode)

“In Arcadia Ego” (*Millennium* episode)

*In Like Flint* (film)

“In Living Color” (*The Hitchhiker* episode)

“In the Cards” (*Tales from the Darkside* episode)

“In the Dark” (*Angel* episode)

“In the Name of Love” (*The Hitchhiker* episode)

“Inca Mummy Girl” (*Buffy the Vampire Slayer* episode)

“Incident in a Small Jail” (*Alfred Hitchcock Presents* episode)

*The Incredible Hulk* (TV series)

*The Incredible Shrinking Man* (film)

“Infiltration” (*Prey* episode)

Ingalls, Don

“Inheritance” (*Poltergeist* episode)

“The Inheritance” (*Friday the the 13th* episode)

“Inhumanitas” (*American Gothic* episode)

“Initiation” (*Alfred Hitchcock Presents* episode)

“Initiation” (*Poltergeist* episode)

“Inner Ear” (*Beyond Reality* episode)

“Innocence” (*Buffy the Vampire Slayer* episode)

“The Innocents” (*Millennium* episode)

“Inside the Closet” (*Tales from the Darkside* episode)

“Interior Loft” (*Freddy’s Nightmares* episode)

“Interior Loft—Later” (*Freddy’s Nightmares* episode)

“The Internment” (*Poltergeist* episode)

*Interview with the Vampire* (book)

“Intimate Shadows” (*Beyond Reality* episode)

*The Invaders* (TV series)

“The Invaders” (*Twilight Zone* episode)

*Invasion of the Body Snatchers* (film)

“Invisible Girl” (*Buffy the Vampire Slayer* episode)

Ireland, Jill

“Irish Jug” (*Poltergeist* episode)

*The Ironhorse* (TV series)

“Irresistible” (*The X-Files* episode)

“Is There a Woogy in the House?” (*Charmed* episode)

Iscove, Robert

Israel, Charles

Issermann, Aline

“It All Comes Out in the Wash” (*Tales from the Darkside* episode)

“It’s a Helluva Life” (*Brimstone*) episode)

“It’s a Miserable Life” (*Freddy’s Nightmares* episode)

“It’s My Party and You’ll Die If I Want You To” (*Freddy’s Nightmares* episode)

“I’ve Got You Under My Skin” (*Angel* episode)

“I’ve Got You Under My Skin” (*Charmed* episode)

Ives, Burl

“Jack in the Box” (*Friday the 13th* episode)

*Jackie Brown* (film)

Jacobs, Adam

Jacobs, Harvey

Jacobs, Lawrence-Hilton

Jaffe, Sam

“Jane Doe” (*Forever Knight* episode)

*Jane Eyre* (book)

Janover, Michael

Janssen, David

Janzen, Naomi

“The Jar” (*Alfred Hitchcock Presents* episode)

“Jar” (*Monsters* episode)

*Jaws* (film)

*Jaws II* (film)

Jefferson, Herbert, Jr.

“The Jersey Devil” (*The X-Files* episode)

Johannesen, Chip

*John Carpenter’s Vampires* (film)

Johnson, Arte

Johnson, Geordie

Johnson, Kenneth

Johnson, Stephen

Johnson, Van

“Joker” (*The Hitchhiker* episode)

Jones, Bruce

Jones, Carolyn

Jones, Deacon

Jones, Mark

Jory, Victor

“Jose Chung’s ‘*Doomsday Defense*’” (*Millennium* episode)

“Jose Chung’s ‘*From Outer Space*’” (*The X-Files* episode)

“The Judge” (*Millennium* episode)

“Judy Miller, Come on Down” (*Freddy’s Nightmares* episode)

“The Juggler” (*She Wolf of London* episode)

“Junior” (*Rod Serling’s Night Gallery* episode)

“Justice” (*Beyond Reality* episode)

“Kaddish” (*The X-Files* episode)

Kahn, James

“Kaidatcha Country” (*The Evil Touch* episode)

*The Kaiser Aluminum Hour* (TV series)

*Kalifornia* (film)

Kamel, Stanley

“Kandinsky’s Vault” (*Alfred Hitchcock Presents* episode)

Kane, Carol

Kanew, Jeff

Kantor, Leonard

Kapelos, John

*Karen* (TV series)



Karlen, John

Kasica, Maryann

Kassir, Jon

Katleman, Michael

Katz, A.L.

Keach, James

Kearney, Gene

Keaton, Diane

“Keep in Touch: We’ll Think of Something” (*Rod Serling’s Night Gallery* episode)

“Keepsake” (*Beyond Reality* episode)

Kefauver, Estes

Kelleher, Tim

Kelly, William

Kern, Brad

Kessler, Bruce

“Key to Yesterday” (*The Next Step Beyond* episode)

Kidder, Margot

“The Kidnapper” (*Tales from the Crypt* episode)

Kiel, Richard

Kiley, Richard

“Kill Switch” (*The X-Files* episode)

*Killer Bees* (film)

“Killer Instinct” (*Beyond Reality* episode)

“Killer Instinct” (*Forever Knight* episode)

“Killer Instinct” (*Freddy’s Nightmares* episode)

*Killer Klowns from Outer Space* (film)

*Kindred: The Embraced* (TV series)

King, Alan

King, Durnford

King, Perry

King, Stephen

King, T.W.

“King of the Road” (*Werewolf* episode)

“Kingdom Come” (*Millennium* episode)

*Kingdom of the Spiders* (film)

Kinski, Klaus

Kirk, Russell

Kirshner, Mia

“A Kiss Is Just a Psi” (*Beyond Reality* episode)

“Kitsunegari” (*The X-Files* episode)

Kjellin, Alf

“Klaus Encounters of the Interred Kind” (*Dracula* episode)

Klemperer, Werner

*Klondike* (film)

Knight, Don

“The Knightly Murders” (*Kolchak: The Night Stalker*)

*Knots Landing*

Kober, Jeff

*Kodiak* (TV series)

*Kojak* (TV series)66

Kolbe, Winrich

*Kolchak: The Night Stalker* (TV series)

Kopell, Bernie

“Korman’s Kalamity” (*Tales from the Crypt* episode)

Kornbluth, C.M.

Kotto, Yaphet

Kozoll, Michael

Kring, Tim

Krause, Brian

Kretchmer, John T.

Kroeker Allan

Kronish, Stephen

Kubrick, Stanley

*Kung Fu* (TV series)

“La Belle Dame Sans Merci” (*Poltergeist* episode)

“La Strega” (*Monsters* episode)

“Lady, Lady, Take My Life” (*The Sixth Sense* episode)

“Lagoda’s Heads” (*Rod Serling’s Night Gallery* episode)

Laing, John

Laird, Jack

“The Lake” (*The Evil Touch* episode)

Lalonde, Larry

Lamas, Lorenzo

“Lamentation” (*Millennium* episode)

Lanchester, Elsa

*Land of the Giants* (TV series)

*Land of the Lost* (TV series)

Landau, Juliet

Landau, Martin

Landers, Audrey

Landers, Judy

Landis, John

Lang, Perry

Lang, Richard

Lang, Stephen James

Lansing, Robert

Larken, Sheila

“Last Act” (*Forever Knight* episode)

“The Last Car” (*Tales from the Darkside* episode)

“The Last Endless Summer” (*The Burning Zone* episode)

“The Last Five Pounds Are the Hardest” (*The Burning Zone* episode)

“The Last Good Knight” (*Poltegeist* episode)

*Last House on the Left* (film)

“Last Knight” (*Forever Knight* episode)

“The Last Laurel” (*Rod Serling’s Night Gallery* episode)

“Last Rites for a Dead Druid” (*Rod Serling’s Night Gallery* episode)

“Last Scene” (*The Hitchhiker* episode)

“The Last Wave” (*Dark Skies* episode)

“Late for Dinner” (*Beyond Reality* episode)

“The Late Mr. Peddington” (*Rod Serling’s Night Gallery* episode)

Latham, Louise

Latt, David

*Laugh-In* (TV series)

Laurel

Lauren, Tammy

Laurence, Ashley

Laurie, Piper

Laurin, William

Lauter, Ed

Laven Arnold

“Law and Order” (*American Gothic* episode)

Lawrence, Anthony

Lawrence, Steve

“Lazarus” (*The X-Files* episode)

Lazenby, George

Lea, Nicholas

Leachman, Cloris

“Learning to Crawl” (*American Gothic* episode)

“Leavings” (*Monsters* episode)

Lee, Christopher

Lee, Michele

Lee, Sheryl

Leekley, John

“The Legacy” (*Monsters* episode)

“The Legacy” (*The Next Step Beyond* episode)

“Legacy of Terror” (*Kolchak: The Night Stalker* episode)

Le Gault, Lance

*The Legend of Hell House* (film)

“The Legendary Billy B.” (*The Hitchhiker* episode)

“Legion of Demons” (*Circle of Fear* episode)

Lehman, Kristine

Leiber, Fritz

Leigh, Janet

Leitch, Christopher

Le May, John

Lembeck, Harvey

Lembeck, Michael

Lenard, Mark

Lengalaan, George

“Leonard Betts” (*The X-Files* episode)

Lerner, Dan

Lerner, Michael

Lester, Seeleg

“Let No Man Tear Asunder” (*Forever Knight* episode)

“Let Sleeping Demons Lie” (*Poltergeist* episode)

“Let the Games Begin” (*Tales from the Darkside* episode)

“Let the Punishment Fit the Crime” (*Tales from the Crypt* episode)

“Let Us Prey” (*Werewolf* episode)

*Lethal Weapon* (film)

“Let’s Play House” (*Beyond Reality* episode)

Levine, Michael

Levinson, Richard

“Levitation” (*Tales from the Darkside* episode)

Levitt, Gene

Levitt, Joseph Gordon

Lewis, Al

Lewis, Bryan

Lewis, Emmanuel

Lewis, John

Lewis, Richard Barton

Lichtman, Myla

“Lie to Me” (*Buffy the Vampire Slayer* episode)

“Life on Death Row” (*Amazing Stories* episode)

“Life Sentence” (*Freddy’s Nightmares* episode)

“Lifeblood” (*Curse of Dracula* chapter)

“Lifebomb” (*Tales from the Darkside* episode)

“The Light” (*Poltergeist* episode)

“Light of Day” (*Poltergeist* episode)

“Lights Out” (*Poltergeist* episode)

“Lindemann’s Catch” (*Rod Serling’s Night Gallery* episode)

Linden, Hal

Lindon, Lionel

Link, William

Linville, Larry

Lipp, Jeremy

Lipton, Peggy

“The List” (*The X-Files* episode)

“The Little Black Bag” (*Rod Serling’s Night Gallery* episode)

“Little Bookshop of Horrors” (*She Wolf of London* episode)

“Little Girl Lost” (*Rod Serling’s Night Gallery* episode)

“Little Girl Lost” (*Twilight Zone* episode)

“Little Green Men” (*The X-Files* episode)

“A Little Nightmare Music” (*Dracula* episode)

*The Little People* (TV series)

Littler, Craig

Littman Jeremy R.

“Live Hard, Die Young and Leave a Good Looking Corpse” (*Kindred: The Embraced* episode)

“Lives in the Balance” (*Poltergeist* episode)

“Living a Lie” (*The Hitchhiker* episode)

Lloyd, Norman

Locke, Sondra

Lockhart, Anne

Lockhart, June

Lockwood, Gary

Loeb, Joseph, III

Lofton, Christopher

*Logan’s Run* (TV series)

Loggia, Robert

“Loin Like a Hunting Flame” (*Millennium* episode)

“Lone Survivor” (*Rod Serling’s Night Gallery* episode)



“Lonely Hearts” (*Angel* episode)

*The Loner* (TV series)

“The Long Road Home” (*Friday the 13th* episode)

Longstreet, Harvey

Longstreet, Renee

Lopez, Angel Dean

Lord, Stephen

*The Loretta Young Show* (TV series)

Loring, Lynn

*Lost Highway* (film)

*Lost in Space* (TV series)

“Lost in Translation” (*Darkroom* episode)

*Love, American Style* (TV series)

*Love and Curses* (TV series; see also *She Wolf of London*)

“The Love Connection” (*The Next Step Beyond* episode)

“Love Hungry” (*Tales from the Darkside* episode)

“Love Hurts” (*Charmed* episode)

“Love Hurts” (*Monsters* episode)

“Love You to Death” (*Forever Knight* episode)

Lovecraft, H.P.

“Loved to Death” (*Tales from the Crypt* episode)

“Lover Come Hack to Me” (*Tales from the Crypt* episode)

“Lovers Walk” (*Buffy the Vampire Slayer* episode)

“Lovesounds” (*The Hitchhiker* episode)

“Loving Cup” (*Beyond Reality* episode)

“Lower Berth” (*Tales from the Crypt* episode)

Lucas, George

Lucas, John Meredyth

Luck, Coleman

“Lucky Stiff” (*Freddy’s Nightmares* episode)

Luddenham, Arthur

Luke, Keye

“Lullaby” (*Poltergeist* episode)

“Lullaby” (*Strange World* episode)

“Luminary” (*Millennium* episode)

Lupo, Frank

Lynch, David

Lynch, Graeme

Lynch, Kelly

Lynch, Paul

Lynch, Richard

Lynley, Carol

Lyons, Robert F.

Lyons, Sue

*Macabre* (film)

Macnee, Patrick

MacCorkindale, Simon

MacLachlan, Kyle

Macready, George

*MAD TV* (TV series)

Madchen, Amick

“Made for Each Other” (*The Hitchhiker* episode)

“Made in Paris” (*The Hitchhiker* episode)

*Madigan* (TV series)

“The Madness Room” (*Tales from the Darkside* episode)

Madsen, Virginia

“The Maestro” (*Friday the 13th* episode)

Magar, Guy

Maharis, George

Majors, Lee

“Make Me Laugh” (*Rod Serling’s Night Gallery* episode)

Makepeace, Chris

“The Maker” (*Monsters* episode)

“Makeup” (*Darkroom* episode)

“Malcolm” (*Monsters* episode)

Malden, Karl

*Man from U.N.C.L.E.* (TV series)

“The Man from the South” (*Alfred Hitchcock Presents* episode)

“Man in the Mist” (*Poltergeist* episode)

“Man of Her Dreams” (*The Hitchhiker* episode)

“Man on the Edge” (*Alfred Hitchcock Presents* episode)

“The Man Who Died at Three and Nine” (*The Sixth Sense* episode)

“The Man Who Knew Too Little” (*Alfred Hitchcock Presents* episode)

*The Man Who Never Was* (TV series)

“Man Who Was Death” (*Tales from the Crypt* episode)

“The Man Who Was Never Born” (*Outer Limits* episode)

Mancuso, Frank

Mancuso, Nick

Mandel, Robert

“The Mandrake Root” (*Monsters* episode)

Manetti, Larry

*The Manhunter* (TV series)

“Maniac at Large” (*Tales from the Crypt* episode)

*Manimal* (TV series)

Mann, Ted

“Mannekins of Horror” (*Monsters* episode)

Manners, Kim

Manning, Richard

*Mannix* (TV series)

“Man’s Best Friend” (*The Hitchhiker* episode)

Mantooth, Randolph

Manzor, Rene

“Maranatha” (*Millennium* episode)

“Marci” (*The Evil Touch* episode)

Marcus, Donald

Margulies, William

Marko, Zekial

Marley, John

“Marmalade Wine” (*Rod Serling’s Night Gallery* episode)

Marmorstein, Malcolm

Marotte, Carl

Marr, Leon

*Married ... with Children* (TV series)

Marsh, Jane

Marsh, Linda

Marshall, E.G.

Marshall, James

Marsters, James

*Martin* (film)

Martin, George R.R.

Martin, Jared

Martin, Pamela Sue

Martin, Quinn

Martin, Ross

Martinelli, Enzo A.

Martinez, A.

Martinson, Les

“The Martyr” (*The Hitchhiker* episode)

“Mary, Mary” (*Tales from the Darkside* episode)

Maschler, Tim

*M\*A\*S\*H\** (TV series)

“The Mask of Adonis” (*Quinn Martin’s Tales of the Unexpected* episode)

Mason, Judi Ann

Mason, Paule

Massey, Raymond

“Master of Darkness” (*Beyond Reality* episode)

“Master of Disguise” (*Friday the the 13th* episode)

*Master of the World* (film)

Mastroianni, Armand

“The Match Game” (*Monsters* episode)

“Material Girl” (*Werewolf* episode)

Matheson, Richard

Matheson, Tim

“Matryoshka” (*Millennium* episode)

“A Matter of Pride” (*The Next Step Beyond* episode)

“A Matter of Semantics” (*Rod Serling’s Night Gallery* episode)

Maurois, Andre

“Max” (*The X-Files* episode)

*Maximum Overdrive* (film)

May, Bradford

Mayo, Virginia

McAdams, James

McCallum, David

McCammon, Robert R.

McCarthy, Julianna

McClanahan, Rue

*McCloud* (TV series)

McClure, Doug

McDevitt, Ruth

McDougall, Don

McDowall, Roddy

McDowell, Malcolm

McDowell, Michael

McEveety, Vincent

McGavin, Darren

McGill, Everett

McGonagle, R. David

McGreevey, John

McGregor-Stewart, Kate

McKeon, Micahel

McKeon, Nancy

McLean, Ron

McLoughlin, Tom

McPherson, John

Medak, Peter

Medford, Don

Meeker, Ralph

“Meet the Beetles” (*American Gothic* episode)

Melle, Gil

“Memento Mori” (*The X-Files* episode)

“Memory Overload” (*Freddy’s Nightmares* episode)

“The Mephisto Ring” (*Friday the the 13th* episode)

“The Merciful” (*Rod Serling’s Night Gallery* episode)

“Mercury Rising” (*Dark Skies* episode)

Meredith, Burgess

Mergault, Oliver

Merrill, Dina

Merton, Zienia

“Mesmer’s Bauble” (*Friday the the 13th* episode)

“The Messiah of Mott Street” (*Rod Serling’s Night Gallery* episode)

Messing, Deborah

“Metamorphosis” (*Poltergeist: The Legacy* episode)

Metcalf, Mark

“The Method Actor” (*Alfred Hitchcock Presents* episode)

Metrano, Art

*Miami Vice* (TV series)

“Micro Minds” (*Monsters* episode)

“Midnight Never Ends” (*Rod Serling’s Night Gallery* episode)

“Midnight of the Carrier” (*The Burning Zone* episode)

“Midnight of the Century” (*Millennium* episode)

“Midnight Riders” (*Friday the the 13th* episode)

“A Midnight Visit to the Neighborhood Bloodbank” (*Rod Serling’s Night Gallery*)

“Mightier Than the Sword” (*Friday the the 13th* episode)

“The Mikado” (*Millennium* episode)

“Milagro” (*The X-Files* episode)

Milano, Alysa

Miles, Joanna

Milford, John

Milhaka, George

“The Milkman Cometh” (*Tales from the Darkside* episode)



Mill, Gerry

Milland, Ray

*Millennium* (TV series)

Miller, Dick

Miller, Penelope Ann

Miller, Stephen E.

Milton, Richard

“Mind Over Matter” (*Dracula* episode)

“Mind’s Eye” (*The X-Files* episode)

Minear, Tim

“Minuteman” (*The Hitchhiker* episode)

“The Miracle at Camafeo” (*Rod Serling’s Night Gallery* episode)

“Miracle Man” (*The X-Files* episode)

“The Miracle of Alice Ames” (*The Hitchhiker* episode)

“Miracle Worker” (*Beyond Reality* episode)

“Mirror, Mirror” (*Alfred Hitchcock Presents* episode)

“Mirror, Mirror” (*Amazing Stories* episode)

“Mirror, Mirror” (*Beyond Reality* episode)

“Miss Lovecraft Sent Me” (*Rod Serling’s Night Gallery* episode)

“Miss May Dusa” (*Tales from the Darkside* episode)

“Missing Persons” (*Freddy’s Nightmares* episode)

“The Mission” (*Amazing Stories* episode)

*Mission: Impossible* (TV series)

“Mr. Denton on Doomsday” (*Twilight Zone* episode)

“Mr. R.I.N.G.” (*Kolchak: The Night Stalker* episode)

*Mr. Sardonicus* (film)

“Mr. Swlabr” (*Monsters* episode)

Mitchell, Cameron

Mobley, Mary Ann

Moffatt, Donald

“The Mole” (*Alfred Hitchcock Presents* episode)

“Moment of Fear” (unsold pilot)

Monarque, Steven

“Monday” (*The X-Files* episode)

Monette, Paul

“Monkey Dreams” (*Freddy’s Nightmares* episode)

*Monkey Planet* (novel)

Monroe, Clyde

“Monster” (*Millennium* episode)

*Monsters* (TV series)

“Monsters in My Room” (*Tales from the Darkside* episode)

Montesi, Jorge

Montgomery, Belinda

Montgomery, Mark

Montelone, Thomas F.

Monterastelli, Art

“Mookie and Pookie” (*Tales from the Darkside*) episode

Moonblood, Q.

Mooney, Hal

“Moonlight Becomes You” (*She Wolf of London* episode)

Moore, Demi

Moorehead, Agnes

“A More Permanent Hell” (*Forever Knight* episode)

Morgan, Darin

Morgan, Dean

Morgan, Glen

Morgan, Harry

Morris, Rene

Morrison, James

Morrow, Rob

Morrow, Vic

Morse, Barry

Morse, Robert

Morton, Howard

*Moses—The Lawgiver* (TV miniseries)

Moss, Stewart

*Most Wanted* (TV series)

“The Moth” (*Tales from the Darkside* episode)

“Mother Instinct” (*Monsters* episode)

“Mournin’ Mess” (*Tales from the Crypt* episode)

“Mourning After” (*Brimstone* episode)

*Movin’ On* (TV series)

“Moving Finger” (*Monsters* episode)

“Moving Targets” (*Dark Skies* episode)

Moxey, John Llewelyn

MTV

Muldaur, Diana

Mullally, Don

“Mummy, Daddy” (*Amazing Stories* episode)

*The Munsters Today* (TV series)

Muntner, Simon

“Murder Party” (*Alfred Hitchcock Presents* episode)

*Murder, She Wrote* (TV series)

“Murder’s for the Birds” (*The Evil Touch* episode)

Murdock, George

Murdock, Kermit

Murphy, Michael

Murray, Jan

“Murray’s Monster” (*Monsters* episode)

“Museum Hearts” (*Monsters* episode)

“Musings of a Cigarette Smoking Man” (*The X-Files* episode)

“Mute Witness to Murder” (*Tales from the Crypt* episode)

Muti, Ornella

“My Boyfriend Is a Vampire” (*Forever Knight* episode)

“My Brother’s Keeper” (*Tales from the Crypt* episode)

“My Dear Watson” (*Alfred Hitchcock Presents* episode)

“My Enemy” (*The Hitchhiker* episode)

“My Fair Vampire” (*Dracula* episode)

*My Favorite Martian* (TV series)

“My Ghostwriter—The Vampire” (*Tales from the Darkside*)

*My Giant* (film)

“My Girlfriend’s Back and There’s Gonna Be Trouble” (*Dracula* episode)

“My Own Place” (*Tales from the Darkside* episode)

“My Wife as a Dog” (*Friday the the 13th* episode)

“My Zombie Lover” (*Monsters* episode)

*Mystery Science Theater*

“Mystical Pizza” (*Love and Curses* episode)

Nagy, Ivan

*Nakia* (TV series)

Nance, Jack

Napier, Alan

Napolitano, Joe

“The Nature of the Enemy” (*Rod Serling’s Night Gallery* episode)

Natwick, Mildred

NBC

*NBC Wednesday Night Mystery*

Neal, L. Ford

Neal, Patricia

“Near Death” (*Forever Knight* episode)

“Needlepoint” (*Darkroom* episode)

Nelson, Barry

Nelson, Dick

Nelson, Ed

Nelson, Harriet

Nelson, Oliver

Nelson, Ozzie

Nelson Reilly, Charles

Nelson, Rick

*Nero Wolfe* (TV series)

Nettleton, Lois

“Never Again” (*The X-Files* episode)

“Never Fool with a Gypsy Icon” (*The Evil Touch* episode)

“Never Kill a Boy on the First Date” (*Buffy the Vampire Slayer* episode)

“The New Arrival” (*Tales from the Crypt* episode)

“New Blood” (*The Hitchhiker* episode)

*The New Breed* (TV series)

“New Dawn” (*The Hitchhiker* episode)

“The New Guard” (*Poltergeist* episode)

“The New House” (*Ghost Story* pilot)

“A New Lease on Life” (*Tales from the Darkside* episode)

New Line Studios

“The New Man” (*Tales from the Darkside* episode)

“New York Honey” (*Monsters* episode)

Newland, John

Newman, Andrea

*The Next Step Beyond* (TV series)

“Nice Girls Don’t” (*She Wolf of London* episode)

“A Nice Place to Visit” (*Twilight Zone* episode)

“Nick of Time” (*Twilight Zone* episode)

Nickelodeon

Nielsen, Leslie

“Night Caller” (*Alfred Hitchcock Presents* episode)

“Night Creatures” (*Alfred Hitchcock Presents* episode)

“Night Flight” (*The Burning Zone* episode)

“Night Hunger” (*Friday the the 13th* episode)

“Night in Question” (*Forever Knight* episode)

“Night of April

*Night of Dark Shadows* (film)

“Night of Decision” (*One Step Beyond* episode)

*Night of the Living Dead* (film)

“Night Prey” (*Friday the the 13th* episode)

*Night Slaves* (telefilm)

*The Night Stalker* (TV movie; see also *Kolchak: The Night Stalker*)

*The Night Stalker: Two Tales of Terror* (video release)

*The Night Strangler* (TV movie; see also *Kolchak: The Night Stalker*)

“Night Terrors” (*Sleepwalkers* episode)

*Night Walkers* (aborted *Kolchak* TV movie)

“Nightfall” (*Beyond Reality* episode)

“Nightmare at Braine Motel” (*Werewolf* episode)

“Nightmare at

*Nightmare Cafe* (TV series)

*Nightmare Classics* (TV series)

“Nightmare in Blue” (*Werewolf* episode)

*A Nightmare on Elm Street* (film)

*Nightmare on Elm Street II: Freddy’s Revenge* (film)

*Nightmare on Elm Street III: Dream Warriors* (film)

*Nightmare on Elm Street IV: The Dream Master* (film)

*Nightmare on Elm Street V: The Dream Warrior* (film)

“Nightmare Without End” (*Beyond Reality* episode)

“Nightmares” (*Buffy the Vampire Slayer* episode)

“Nightshift” (*The Hitchhiker* episode)

“Nightstalker” (*Kindred: The Embraced* episode)

“Nightwatch” (*Werewolf* episode)

Nimoy, Leonard

“Nisei” (*The X-Files* episode)

Niven, Kip

“No More Mr. Nice Guy” (*Freddy’s Nightmares* episode)

“No Strings” (*Tales from the Darkside* episode)

“No Way Out” (*Quinn Martin’s Tales of the Unexpected* episode)

Noel, Maurice

Nogulich, Natalija

Nolan, Jeanette

Nolan, William

“The Nomads” (*Quinn Martin’s Tales of the Unexpected* episode)

“None but the Lonely Heart” (*Tales from the Crypt* episode)

*The Norliss Tapes* (telefilm)

*North by Northwest* (film)

*Northern Exposure* (TV series)

Noseworthy, Jack

“Nostalgia” (*Millennium* episode)



“Nothing Evil in These Woods” (*Werewolf* episode)

Nouri, Michael

*Nowhere Man*

Noxon, Marti

Noyce, Philip

Nutter, David

*NYPD Blue* (TV series)

Oakland, Simon

O’Bannon, Rockne

“The Obituary” (*The Evil Touch* episode)

O’Brien, Richard

O’Connell, Arthur

O’Connor, Tim

“O.D. Feelin” (*The Hitchhiker* episode)

*The Odd Couple* (TV series)

“The Odds” (*Tales from the Darkside* episode)

Odell, David

O’Fallon, Peter

O’Farrell, Conor

“Offspring” (*The Hitchhiker* episode)

“Oil’s Well That Ends Well” (*Tales from the Crypt* episode)

O’Keefe, Peter

Oliansky, Joel

“The Old Soft Shoe” (*Tales from the Darkside* episode)

Oliver, Susan

*The Omega Man* (film)

“Omerta” (*Millennium* episode)

“On a Dead Man’s Chest” (*Tales from the Crypt* episode)

*On Her Majesty’s Secret Service* (film)

“On Wings of Angels” (*The Burning Zone* episode)

“Once Upon a Chilling” (*The Sixth Sense* episode)

“Once Upon a Time” (*Twilight Zone* episode)

“Ondine’s Curse” (*The Next Step Beyond* episode)

“One Breath” (*The X-Files* episode)

“One Last Prayer” (*The Hitchhiker* episode)

*One Man’s Family* (TV series)

“One Son” (*The X-Files* episode)

*One Step Beyond* (TV series)

“One Wolf’s Family” (*Monsters* episode)

O’Neal, Patrick

O’Neill, Robert F.

“Only Sin Deep” (*Tales from the Crypt* episode)

“Only Skin Deep” (*Tales from the Crypt* episode)

“Only the Lonely” (*Forever Knight* episode)

Onorato, Peter

Oostrum, Kees Van

“Operation Friendship” (*Tales from the Crypt* episode)

O’Quinn, Tery

“Orange Volvo” (*G vs E* episode)

Orbach, Jerry

“Ordeal on Locust Street” (*One Step Beyond* episode)

“Origins” (*Prey* episode)

“Other Voices” (*The Next Step Beyond* episode)

“The Other Way Out” (*Rod Serling’s Night Gallery* episode)

*Otherworld* (TV series)

O’Toole, Annette

“Oubliette” (*The X-Files* episode)

*Our Man Flint* (film)

“Our Town” (*The X-Files* episode)

“Out of Body” (*The Next Step Beyond* episode)

“Out of Mind, Out of Sight” (*Buffy the Vampire Slayer* episode)

*Out of Sight* (film)

“Out of Sight” (*Poltergeist* episode)

“Out of the Night” (*The Hitchhiker* episode)

*Outbreak* (film)

*The Outer Limits* (TV series/original)

*The Outer Limits* (TV series/remake)

Outerbridge, Peter

“Outpost” (*Monsters* episode)

“Outside the Lines” (*Forever Knight* episode)

“Owls” (*Millennium* episode)

“The Pack” (*Buffy the Vampire Slayer* episode)

“The Pact” (*The Next Step Beyond* episode)

Padrino, James

Page, Geraldine

“Pain Killer” (*Tales from the Darkside* episode)

“The Painted Mirror” (*Rod Serling’s Night Gallery* episode)

“The Painting” (*Poltergeist* episode)

Palance, Jack

Palay, Stephanie

Palethorpe, Jillian

“Pamela’s Voice” (*Rod Serling’s Night Gallery* episode)

“Paper Clip” (*The X-Files* episode)

“The Paper Dove” (*Millennium* episode)

“Paper Hearts” (*The X-Files* episode)

“Parents from Space” (*Monsters* episode)

Parker, Lara

Parker, Monica

Parker, Suzy

Parkins, Barbara

“Parlour Floor Front” (*Tales from the Darkside* episode)

Parriott, James

“Part of Me” (*The Hitchhiker* episode)

“Parting Gifts” (*Angel* episode)

“Partners of the Month” (*Forever Knight* episode)

“The Partnership” (*Darkroom* episode)

“Passion” (*Buffy the Vampire Slayer* episode)

“The Passion” (*Beyond Reality* episode)

Pataki, Michael

Pate, Jonas

Pate, Josh

“Patient X” (*The X-Files* episode)

Paul, Adrian

Paul, Alexandra

Paulin, Scott

Paulson, Sarah

“Payment Overdue” (*Tales from the Darkside* episode)

Pearce, Richard

“Pendergast” (short story)

Penfold, Christopher

Penn, Leo

*The People Under the Stairs* (film)

Pera, Radames

“Perchance to Dream” (*Monsters* episode)

“Perfect Order” (*The Hitchhiker* episode)

*Perils of Pauline* (film)

Perry, Michael R.

*Perry Mason* (TV series)

“The Pest House” (*Millennium* episode)

Peters, Brock

Pettet, Joanna

Petty, Lori

“Petty Thieves” (*The Hitchhiker* episode)

Peyton, Harley

Pflug, Jo Ann

*The Phantom Empire* (film)

“The Phantom Farmhouse” (*Rod Serling’s Night Gallery* episode)

“The Phantom of Herald Square” (*Circle of Fear* episode)

“Phantom of What Opera?” (*Rod Serling’s Night Gallery* episode)

“Phantom Zone” (*The Hitchhiker* episode)

“Phases” (*Buffy the Vampire Slayer* episode)

*The Phil Silvers Show* (TV series)

*The Phoenix* (TV series)

“Photo Finish” (*Freddy’s Nightmares* episode)

Pickens, Slim

*Picket Fences* (TV series)

“Pickman’s Model” (*Rod Serling’s Night Gallery* episode)

*The Picture of Dorian Gray* (telefilm)

Pierce, Arthur C.

Pierson, Frank

Pileggi, Mitch

“Pillow Talk” (*Monsters* episode)

“Pipe Dream” (*Friday the the 13th* episode)

“Piper Maru” (*The X-Files* episode)

“Pirate’s Promise” (*Friday the the 13th* episode)

Pitlik, Noam

Pitt, Brad

“The Plague Sower” (*American Gothic* episode)

*Planet of the Apes* (film)

*Planet of the Apes* (TV series)

*Platoon* (film)

Playdon, Paul

“The Playhouse” (*Friday the the 13th* episode)

“Pleas of the Undead” (*Curse of Dracula* chapter)

Pleasence, Donald

Plumb, Eve

Poe, Edgar Allan

“Poem” (*Brimstone* episode)

Pohl, Frederick

“The Poison Pen” (*Friday the the 13th* episode)

Polanski, Roman

*Police Squad* (TV series)

*Police Woman* (TV series)

Pollack, Louis

Polo, Teri

*Poltergeist* (film)

*Poltergeist II: The Other Side* (film)

*Poltergeist III* (film)

*Poltergeist: The Legacy* (TV series)

“Pool Sharks” (*Monsters* episode)

Popwell, Albert

“Portents” (*Poltergeist: The Legacy* episode)

“Portrait of the Artist” (*Monsters* episode)

“Portrait of the Mind” (*The Next Step Beyond* episode)

Posey, Stephen L.

“Possessed” (*The Next Step Beyond* episode)

“The Possession” (*Poltergeist* episode)

“Potato Boy” (*American Gothic* episode)

Powell, Hall

“Power of Two” (*Charmed* episode)

“Powers, Principalities, Thrones and Dominions” (*Millennium* episode)

Powers, Stefanie

Pracher, Jack

*Practical Magic* (film)

Prange, Laurie

Pressman, Lawrence

*Prey* (TV series)

Price, Vincent

Pridy, Roderick J.

“Prime Cut” (*Freddy’s Nightmares* episode)

Prime Time Access Rule

Prince, Robert

“Prince of the City” (*Kindred: the Embraced* episode)

Prine, Andrew

“Printer’s Devil” (*Tales from the Darkside* episode)

“Prism” (*Alfred Hitchcock Presents* episode)

*The Prisoner* (TV series)

“The Prisoner” (*Friday the the 13th* episode)

*Probe* (TV series)

“Prodigal” (*Angel* episode)



“The Prodigy” (*Poltergeist* episode)

“Professor Peabody’s Last Lecture” (*Rod Serling’s Night Gallery* episode)

“Progeny” (*Prey* episode)

“The Prom” (*Buffy the Vampire Slayer* episode)

“The Prophecies” (*Friday the the 13th* episode)

“Prophecy Girl” (*Buffy the Vampire Slayer* episode)

“Prosecutor” (*Alfred Hitchcock Presents* episode)

*The Protectors* (TV series)

*Psi-Factor: Chronicles of the Paranormal* (TV series)

*The Psychiatrist* (TV series)

*Psycho* (film)

*Pulitzer Prize Playhouse* (TV series)

Pullbrook, Violet

Pullman, Barry

*Pulp Fiction* (film)

“The Puppet Show” (*Buffy the Vampire Slayer* episode)

Purl, Linda

“Pursuit” (*Prey* episode)

“Pusher” (*The X-Files* episode)

“Quagmire” (*The X-Files* episode)

Quaid, Randy

Quayle, Anthony

“Queen of Harps” (*Forever Knight* episode)

“The Question of Fear” (*Rod Serling’s Night Gallery* episode)

“A Quiet Funeral” (*Darkroom* episode)

“Quilt of Hathor” (*Friday the 13th* episode)

Quinlan, Kathleen

Quinn, Colin

Quinn, Glenn

Quinn, Seabury

*Quinn Martin’s Tales of the Unexpected* (TV series)

“Quoth the Raven” (*Rod Serling’s Night Gallery* episode)

Rabkin, William

*Radar Men from the Moon* (film)

Railsback, Steve

Raimi, Sam

“Rain Dance” (*Monsters* episode)

“Rain King” (*The X-Files* episode)

Ralston, Gilbert

Randolph, John

“Range of Motion” (*Beyond Reality* episode)

“Ransom” (*Poltergeist* episode)

*The Rapture* (film)

“Rare Objects” (*Rod Serling’s Night Gallery* episode)

“The Rarest of Wines” (*Darkroom* episode)

Rathbone, Tina

Rawlins, David

*Ray Bradbury Theater* (TV series)

Rayfield, David

Raymond, Bill

“Read My Lips” (*Friday the 13th* episode)

“Reaper” (*Monsters* episode)

*Rear Window* (film)

Reaves, Micahel

*Rebecca* (film)

“Rebirth” (*American Gothic* episode)

“The Reckoning” (*Poltergeist* episode)

“The Red and the Black” (*The X-Files* episode)

“Red Museum” (*The X-Files* episode)

Redlich, Edward

Redmond, Sarah-Jane

“Redux” (*The X-Files* episode)

“Refugee” (*Monsters* episode)

Reiff, Ethan

Rein-Hagen, Mark

Reiner, Carl

Reisner, Allen

*The Relic* (film)

“The Reluctant Vampire” (*Tales from the Crypt* episode)

“Remembering Melody” (*The Hitchhiker* episode)

*Remington Steele* (TV series)

“Renaissance” (*The Hitchhiker* episode)

“Rendezvous” (*One Step Beyond* episode)

Reneau, Robert

“Repentance” (*Poltergeist* episode)

“Report from the Grave” (*Tales from the Crypt* episode)

*The Reporter* (TV series)

“Reptile Boy” (*Buffy the Vampire Slayer* episode)

“Requiem” (*American Gothic* episode)

“Rerun” (*Monsters* episode)

“Resurrector” (*American Gothic* episode)

“The Return of Cary DeWitt” (*The Next Step Beyond* episode)

“The Return of Mitchell Campion” (*One Step Beyond* episode)

“The Return of the Sorcerer” (*Rod Serling’s Night Gallery* episode)

“Return Visit” (*Beyond Reality* episode)

“Reunion” (*Beyond Reality* episode)

“Revelations” (*Buffy the Vampire Slayer* episode)

“Revelations” (*Poltergeist* episode)

“Revelations” (*Prey* episode)

“Revelations” (*The X-Files* episode)

“Revenge” (*Alfred Hitchcock Presents* episode)

“Revenge Is the Nuts” (*Tales from the Crypt* episode)

Rey, Alejandro

Reynolds, Burt

Rhue, Madlyn

Ribisi, Giovanni

Rice, Anne

Rice, Jeff

Rich, David Lowell

Richards, Paul

“Riding the Nightmare” (*The Hitchhiker* episode)

“The Right Kind of Medicine” (*Alfred Hitchcock Presents* episode)

“The Ring” (*Angel* episode)

“Ring Around the Redhead” (*Tales from the Darkside* episode)

“Ring of Fire” (*American Gothic* episode)

“The Ring with the Red Velvet Ropes” (*Rod Serling’s Night Gallery* episode)

“The Ripper” (*Kolchak: The Night Stalker* episode)

*Riptide* (TV series)

“The Rise and Fall of Eddie Fiori” (*Kindred: The Embraced* episode)

Riseman, Del

Ritchie, Dawn

Ritter, John

“Road Hog” (*Alfred Hitchcock Presents* episode)

*Roald Dahl’s Tales of the Unexpected* (TV series)

Robbie, Seymour

*Robert Montgomery Presents* (TV series)

Roberts, Pernell

Roberts, Rachel

Robey

Robie, Wendy

Robinson, Edward G.

Robinson, Jay

Robison, Michael

*Robocop* (film)

Roby, Mary Linn

*Rod Serling's Night Gallery* (TV series)

Rodrigues, Percy

Roe, Channon

Rogers, Mimi

Rohm, Elizabeth

Rohner, Clayton

“Roland” (*The X-Files* episode)

Roley, Sutton

Rolle, Esther

“Romance Machine” (*Alfred Hitchcock Presents* episode)

“Romeo and Juliet” (*Kindred: The Embraced* episode)

Romero, Cesar

Romero, George

Roncelli, Joe

Rontog, William

*Room*

“The Room Upstairs” (*One Step Beyond* episode)

“Room w/a Vu” (*Angel* episode)

“Room with a View” (*Rod Serling's Night Gallery* episode)

“A Room with No View” (*Millennium* episode)

Rooney, Mickey

“Roosters” (*Millennium* episode)

“Root of All Evil” (*Friday the the 13th* episode)

*Rosemary's Baby* (film)

Rosenquist, J. Wesley

Rosenthal, Everett

Rosenthal, Rick

Ross, Gary

Ross, Marion

Rothstein, Richard

“Rough Beast” (*Poltergeist* episode)

“Rouse Him Not” (*Monsters* episode)

Rowe, Arthur

Rowlands, Gena

Rubin, Mann

Rubini, Michel

Rubinstein, Richard

Rubinstein, Zelda

“Running with the Pack” (*Werewolf* episode)

Rush, Barbara

Ruskin, Joseph

Rutherford, Kelly

Ryan, Jeri

Ryan, Lisa Dean

Ryder, Alfred

*Saboteur* (film)

*Sabrina the Teenage Witch* (TV series)

Sackheim, Daniel

“Sacrament” (*Millennium* episode)

“Sacrifice” (*Poltergeist* episode)

“The Sacrifice” (*Tales from the Crypt* episode)

Sadler, William

Sadowski, Michael

Sadwith, James

Safan, Craig

“Safe Sex” (*Freddy’s Nightmares* episode)

Sagal, Boris

St. Clair, Margaret

Sakovich, Nancy Anne

Sales, Soupy

Sallows, Roy

Salmi, Albert

*San Francisco International Airport* (TV series)

“Sanctuary” (*Angel* episode)

“Sanctuary for a Child” (*Nightmare Cafe* episode)

Sandefur, B.W.

Sandhaus, Ellen

Sanford, Garwin

Sanford, Gerald

Sangster, Jimmy

“Sanguinarium” (*The X-Files* episode)

Sapinsley, Alvin

Sara, Mia

Saraceno, Carol

Sargent, Pamela



Sarrazin, Michael

“Satan in the Suburbs” (*Monsters* episode)

“The Satanic Piano” (*Tales from the Darkside* episode)

“Satisfaction Guaranteed” (*Rod Serling’s Night Gallery* episode)

Satrina, Carole Lucia

“Saturday Night Special” (*Freddy’s Nightmares* episode)

“Saturn Dreaming of Mercury” (*Millennium* episode)

Sauter, Ed

Savini, Tom

Saxon, John

Sbarga, Raphael

Scaini, Stefan

Scarabelli, Michelle

“Scarecrow” (*Friday the the 13th* episode)

“Scared to Death” (*The Evil Touch* episode)

“Scarlet Cinema” (*Friday the the 13th* episode)

Scheff, Mike

Schell, Catherine

Schenkel, Carl

Scherer, Rober

Schiro, Jeff

“Schizogeny” (*The X-Files* episode)

Schmerer, James

Schmidt, William

Schnirring, Alice Mary

Scholz, Carter

“School Hard” (*Buffy the Vampire Slayer* episode)

Schulman, Tom

Schurmacher, Emile C.

Schwarzenegger, Arnold

Sci-Fi Channel

Scorsese, Martin

Scott, Jeffrey

Scott, Klea

Scott, Matthew

Scott, Pippa

*Scream* (film)

*Scream*

*Scream of the Wolf* (telefilm)

Seagrove, Jenny

“Sealed in Blood” (*Curse of Dracula* chapter)

“Séance” (*Tales from the Crypt* episode)

*SeaQuest DSV* (TV series)

*Search* (TV series)

Searcy, Nick

*Season to Be Wary* (anthology)

“Seasons of Belief” (*Tales from the Darkside* episode)

*The Secret Empire*

“Secret in the Neighborhood” (*The Burning Zone* episode)

“Secret Ingredient” (*The Hitchhiker* episode)

“Secrets” (*The Hitchhiker* episode)

“Secrets and Guys” (*Charmed* episode)

“Seduction” (*Poltergeist* episode)

“Seeing Is Believing” (*The Evil Touch* episode)

*Seinfeld* (TV series)

Selbo, Jule

Sellers, Arthur

Semel, David

Senensky, Ralph

“Sense and Anti-Sense” (*Millennium* episode)

“Sense and Sensitivity” (*Angel* episode)

*The Sentinel* (TV series)

“Sentry” (*Kolchak: The Night Stalker* episode)

“Sepulcher of the Undead” (*Curse of Dracula* chapter)

Serling, Rod

*Serpent and the Rainbow* (film)

“A Serpent’s Tooth” (*Tales from the Darkside* episode)

Sessions, Almira

*Seven* (film)

*Seven Days* (TV series)

“Seven in One” (*Millennium* episode)

Severance, Joan

“Seymourlama” (*Tales from the Darkside* episode)

Shackelford, Ted

“Shades of Gray” (*Dark Skies* episode)

*Shades of L.A.* (TV series)

“Shadow Boxer” (*Friday the the 13th* episode)

*Shadow Chasers* (TV series)

“Shadow Fall” (*Poltergeist* episode)

“Shadow in the Well” (*The Sixth Sense* episode)

“Shadow Puppets” (*The Hitchhiker* episode)

“Shadows” (*The X-Files* episode)

Shakespeare, William

Shalhoub, Tony

“Shaman’s Apprentice” (*Friday the the 13th* episode)

“Shapes” (*The X-Files* episode)

Shatner, William

“Shattered Vows” (*The Hitchhiker* episode)

“Shave and a Haircut, Two Bites” (*Monsters* episode)

Shaver, Helen

Shaw, Larry

“She” (*Angel* episode)

Shaye, Robert

“She Devil” (*She Wolf of London* episode)

*She Wolf of London* (TV series; see also *Love and Curses*)

Shear, Barry

Sheen, Martin

Sheldon, Les

“She’ll Be Company for You” (*Rod Serling’s Night Gallery* episode)

“She’s Got the Devil in Her Heart” (*Poltergeist* episode)

Shiban, John

Shimmerman, Armin

Shire, David

Shockley, Sallie

Shook, Warner

Shoop, Pamela

*Short Circuit* (film)

Shpetner, Stan

“The Shrine” (*Tales from the Darkside* episode)

“Siege of

Siegel, Gerald S.

*Sightings* (TV series)

“The Signalman” (*Poltergeist* episode)

Sikking, James

*Silence of the Lambs* (film)

“Silent Partner” (*Poltergeist* episode)

*Silent Running* (film)

“Silent Snow, Secret Snow” (*Rod Serling’s Night Gallery* episode)

“The Silent Tower” (*The Burning Zone* episode)

Silva, Henry

Silver, Joel

Silvers, Phil

Simmonds, Alan

Simmons, Garner

Simmons, Gene

Simmons, Jean

*The Simpsons* (TV series)

“Sin-Sop” (*Monsters* episode)

“Since Aunt Ada Came to Stay” (*Rod Serling’s Night Gallery* episode)

Singer, Arthur H.

“A Single Blade of Grass” (*Millennium* episode)

“Sins of Omission” (*The Next Step Beyond* episode)

“Sins of the Father” (*Poltergeist* episode)

“The Sins of the Father” (*Rod Serling’s Night Gallery* episode)

“Siren” (*Millennium* episode)

“Siren Song” (*Monsters* episode)

Sisk, Frank

*The Six Million Dollar Man* (TV series)

*Six Wives of Henry VIII* (miniseries)

*The Sixth Sense* (movie)

*The Sixth Sense* (TV series)

“Skeleton in the Closet” (*Alfred Hitchcock Presents*)

Skerritt, Tom

“Skinwalker” (*Werewolf* episode)

“Skull and Bones” (*Millennium* episode)

Slan, Jon

Slater, Christian

“Sleeper” (*Prey* episode)

“Sleeping Dragon” (*Monsters* episode)

“Sleepless” (*The X-Files* episode)

*Sleepwalkers* (TV series)

Slesar, Henry

*Sliders* (TV series)

“Slight Case of Murder” (*Tales from the Crypt* episode)

“Slippage” (*Tales from the Darkside* episode)

Sloan, Michael

“Small Blessing” (*Monsters* episode)

“Small Potatoes” (*The X-Files* episode)

*Small Soldiers* (film)

“Smile Please” (*Rod Serling’s Night Gallery* episode)

Smith, Dick

Smith, Howard

Smith, Kevin

Smith, Lane

Smitrovitch, Bill

“Smoke Wrings” (*Tales from the Crypt* episode)

“Snip, Snip” (*Tales from the Darkside* episode)

*The Snoop Sisters* (TV series)

Snow, Mark

Sobel, Mark

“The Social Climber” (*Tales from the Darkside* episode)

Sofaer, Abraham

“Soft Light” (*The X-Files* episode)

Sohl, Jerry

Solari, Rudi

Sole, Alfred

“Some Assembly Required” (*Buffy the Vampire Slayer* episode)

“Somehow, Satan Got Behind Me” (*Millennium* episode)

“Someone to Watch Over Me” (*Poltergeist* episode)

“Something in the Woodwork” (*Rod Serling’s Night Gallery* episode)

*Something Is Out There* (TV series)

“Something Wicca This Way Comes” (*Charmed* episode)

*Somewhere in Time* (film)

Somkin, Arnold

“Somnambulist” (*Angel* episode)

“Song of the Raven” (*Poltergeist* episode)

“Sons of Belial” (*Forever Knight* episode)

“Sophie, Queen of the Night” (*Dracula* episode)

Sorel, Louise

“Sorry, Right Number” (*Tales from the Darkside* episode)

Soul, David

“The Sound of Snow” (*Millennium* episode)

“South by Southeast” (*Alfred Hitchcock Presents* episode)

South, Leonard J.

“Space” (*The X-Files* episode)

*Space: Above and Beyond* (TV series)

*Space: 1999*

*Space Precinct* (TV series)

“Space-Eaters” (*Monsters* episode)

Spalding, Harry



“The Spanish Moss Murders” (*Kolchak: The Night Stalker* episode)

“Spare Parts” (*Circle of Fear* episode)

Sparer, Paul

Specht, Robert

“Specialty of the House” (*Alfred Hitchcock Presents* episode)

“Spectre in Tap Shoes” (*Rod Serling’s Night Gallery* episode)

“Spectre of the Wolf” (*Werewolf* episode)

*Speed* (film)

Spelling, Aaron

Spelling, Tori

Spiegel, Larry

Spielberg, Steven

Spiner, Brent

“Spinning Wheel” (*The Hitchhiker* episode)

Spinrad, Norman

“Spirit of Television” (*Friday the the 13th* episode)

“The Spirit Photographer” (*Tales from the Darkside* episode)

“The Spirit Thief” (*Poltergeist* episode)

“Split Decision” (*The Hitchhiker* episode)

“Split Personality” (*Tales from the Crypt* episode)

“Split Second” (*Tales from the Crypt* episode)

“Spoiled” (*Tales from the Crypt* episode)

Spotnitz, Frank

“Square Deal” (*The Hitchhiker* episode)

“Squeeze” (*The X-Files* episode)

“The Squire of Gothos” (*Star Trek* episode)

Stack, Robert

“Staired in Horror” (*Tales from the Crypt* episode)

Stanley, Paul

*Star Trek* (TV series)

*Star Trek: Deep Space Nine* (TV series)

*Star Trek: The Next Generation* (TV series)

*Star Trek II: The Wrath of Khan* (film)

*Star Trek III: The Search for Spock* (film)

*Star Trek IV: The Voyage Home* (film)

*Star Trek: Voyager* (TV series)

*Star Wars* (film)

*Star Wars Episode I: The Phantom Menace* (film)

*The Starlost* (TV series)

*Starship Troopers* (film)

*Starsky and Hutch* (TV series)

“Stay Tuned, We’ll Be Right Back” (*Darkroom* episode)

Stefano, Joe

Steele, Barbara

Stella, Antoinette

Stenn, David

*Stephen King’s The Golden Years*

Sterling, Tisha

Sternhagen, Frances

Stevens, Connie

Stevens, Leslie

Stevens, Stella

Stevenson, Parker

Stewart, Alexandra

“Still Waters” (*Poltergeist* episode)

Stiller, Jerry

Stockwell, Dean

“Stolen Hearts” (*Poltergeist* episode)

Stone, Jonathan

Stone, Oliver

“A Stop at Willoughby” (*Twilight Zone* episode)

“Stop Killing Me” (*Rod Serling’s Night Gallery* episode)

*Stop Susan Williams*

Storch, Larry

Storke, Adam

Straczynski, J. Michael

*Strait Jacket* (film)

*The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* (telefilm)

“The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde” (*Nightmare Classics* episode)

“Strange Love” (*Tales from the Darkside* episode)

*Strange Report* (TV series)

*Strange World* (TV series)

“Stranger Than Fiction” (*Forever Knight* episode)

“Strangers in the Night” (*Dark Skies* episode)

“Strangler” (*American Gothic* episode)

Strasberg, Susan

“Strate Shooter” (*The Hitchhiker* episode)

Straumer, Charles

*The Streets of San Francisco* (TV series)

Streff, Jean

Streiber, Whitley

“Stressed Environment” (*Monsters* episode)

Strickland, Gail

Strickler, Jerry

“Strings” (*Forever Knight* episode)

“Striptease” (*The Hitchhiker* episode)

“Strong Arm of the Law” (*American Gothic* episode)

Strudel, Etienne

“Strung Along” (*Tales from the Crypt* episode)

Strysik, John

Sullivan, Barry

“The Substitute” (*Poltergeist* episode)

“The Summer House” (*Ghost Story* episode)

*Superman* (film)

“Surprise Party” (*Tales from the Crypt* episode)

“Survival of the Fittest” (*Alfred Hitchcock Presents* episode)

Susi, Carole Ann

*Suspense* (TV series)

Sutherland, John

Sutherland, Kristine

*Swamp Thing* (TV series)

Swanson, Kristy

“The Swap” (*Tales from the Crypt* episode)

“The Swap” (*Tales from the Darkside* episode)

*The Sweet Hereafter* (film)

*Sweet, Sweet Rachel* (TV movie)

“The Sweetest Sting” (*Friday the the 13th* episode)

Swensen, Edithe

Swirnoff, Bradley R.

*Switch* (TV series)

“The Switch” (*Tales from the Crypt* episode)

“Symphony in B#” (*Friday the the 13th* episode)

“Synchrony” (*The X-Files* episode)

“Syzygy” (*The X-Files* episode)

Szarabacjka, Keith

Szwarc, Jeannot

“Tails I Live, Heads You Die” (*Friday the the 13th* episode)

*Tales from the Crypt* (film)

*Tales from the Crypt* (TV series)

*Tales from the Crypt Keeper* (animated TV series)

*Tales from the Crypt Presents Demon Knight* (film)

*Tales from the Crypt Presents Bordello of Blood* (film)

*Tales from the Darkside* (TV series)

*Tales from the Darkside: The Movie* (film)

“Tales of the Undead” (*Friday the the 13th* episode)

“Talitha Cumi” (*The X-Files* episode)

Tamblyn, Russ

Tankosic, Tim

Tapscott, Mark

“Tattoo” (*Friday the the 13th* episode)

Tatum, Bradford

Taub, William

Tayback, Vic

Taylor, Benjamin

Taylor, Dub

Taylor, Don

Taylor, Lili

Taylor, Roderick

“Teacher’s Pet” (*Buffy the Vampire Slayer* episode)

“The Tear Collector” (*Tales from the Darkside* episode)

“Ted” (*Buffy the Vampire Slayer* episode)

*Teen Wolf* (film)

“Television Terror” (*Tales from the Crypt* episode)

“Teliko” (*The X-Files* episode)

“Tell David” (*Rod Serling’s Night Gallery* episode)

“Tempus Fugit” (*The X-Files* episode)

“The Tenement” (*Poltergeist* episode)

Tennant, Victoria

“Teotwawki” (*Millennium* episode)

Tepper, Craig

“Terma” (*The X-Files* episode)

*The Terminator* (film)

*Terminator*

“Terms of Endearment” (*The X-Files* episode)

“Teso Dos Bichos” (*The X-Files* episode)

Tewkesbury, Joan

*The Texas Chainsaw Massacre* (film)

Thackery, Bud

“Thank You for Not Morphing” (*Charmed* episode)

“That ’70s Episode” (*Charmed* episode)

*That ’70s Show* (TV series)

Thatcher, Torin

“The End” (*The X-Files* episode)

“Theatre of the Absurd” (*Beyond Reality* episode)

“There Aren’t Any More MacBanes” (*Rod Serling’s Night Gallery* episode)

“There Was a Little Girl” (*Alfred Hitchcock Presents* episode)

“They” (*The Evil Touch* episode)

“They Have Been, They Are, They Will Be” (*Kolchak: The Night Stalker* episode)

“They’re Tearing Down Tim Riley’s Bar” (*Rod Serling’s Night Gallery* episode)

Thicke, Alan

*Thicker Than Water* (TV series)

“The Thin White Line” (*Millennium* episode)

*The Thing* (film [1982 remake])

“The Thing from the Grave” (*Tales from the Crypt* episode)

Thinnes, Roy

“The Third Pig” (*Tales from the Crypt* episode)

“Thirst for Death” (*Curse of Dracula* chapter)

*Thirteen Ghosts* (film)

“Thirteen Years Later” (*Millennium* episode)

“Thirteenth Generation” (*Poltergeist* episode)

*This Island Earth* (film)

“This’ll Kill Ya” (*Tales from the Crypt* episode)

Thomas, Richard

Thomas, Serena Scott

Thompson, Brian

Thompson, Susanna

Thomson, Chris

Thorson, Linda

“Three of a Kind” (*The X-Files* episode)

“Three’s a Crowd” (*Tales from the Crypt* episode)

“Threshold to Eternity” (*Curse of Dracula* chapter)

*Thriller* (TV series)

“Through a Flame Darkly” (*The Sixth Sense* episode)

“Through a Glass Darkly” (*Millennium* episode)

“Thunderbolt” (*The Next Step Beyond* episode)

“Tidal Wave” (*One Step Beyond* episode)

Tierney, Jacob

Tierney, Lawrence

“’Til Death” (*Tales from the Crypt*)

Till, Eric



“A Time for Rifles” (*The Hitchhiker* episode)

“The Time Is Now” (*Millennium* episode)

“Time of Terror” (*Ghost Story* episode)

*The Tingler* (film)

Tiplady, Brittany

*Titanic* (film)

“Tithonus” (*The X-Files* episode)

“To Be or Not to Be ... Evil” (*G vs E* episode)

“To Dream of Wolves” (*Werewolf* episode)

“To Fight a Ghost” (*The Next Step Beyond* episode)

“To Hell and Back” (*American Gothic* episode)

“To Prey in Darkness” (*Dark Skies* episode)

“To Sanshu in L.A.” (*Angel* episode)

Todd, Tony

Tolkin, Stephen

Tompkins, Angel

“Tonight at

“Tooms” (*The X-Files* episode)

“Top Billing” (*Tales from the Crypt* episode)

Torn, Rip

*Total Recall* (film)

“Touch of Madness” (*Ghost Story* episode)

“Touch of the Dead” (*The Burning Zone* episode)

“Tough Guys Don’t Whine” (*The Hitchhiker* episode)

“Tourist Trap” (*The Hitchhiker* episode)

“Town Without Pity” (*Poltergeist* episode)

Townes, Harry

“Toxic Shock” (*The Hitchhiker* episode)

*Toy Story* (film)

“Tragedy Tonight” (*Alfred Hitchcock Presents* episode)

“Traitor” (*Poltergeist* episode)

“Traitor Among Us” (*Poltergeist* episode)

“Trance of Death” (*The Next Step Beyond* episode)

“Transference” (*Poltergeist* episode)

“The Trap” (*Tales from the Crypt* episode)

“Trapped” (*Poltergeist* episode)

Travanti, Daniel J.

“Travelers” (*The X-Files* episode)

Travis, Bill

Travis, Nancy

“A Tree Grows in Trinity” (*American Gothic* episode)

“Tree of Life” (*Friday the 13th* episode)

*Tremors* (film)

Trevey, Ken

“The Trevi Collection” (*Kolchak: The Night Stalker* episode)

Trevino, Jesus

“The Trial” (*The Evil Touch* episode)

“Triangle” (*American Gothic* episode)

“Triangle” (*The X-Files* episode)

“Trick or Treat” (*Tales from the Darkside* episode)

*Trilogy of Terror* (telefilm)

*Trog* (film)

Trotter, Kate

“The Trouble with Mary Jane” (*Tales from the Darkside* episode)

“The Trouble with Tribbles” (*Star Trek* episode)

Troupe, Tom

“True Believer” (*The Hitchhiker* episode)

“Trust Me” (*The Hitchhiker* episode)

“The Truth Is Out There ... and It Hurts” (*Charmed* episode)

“Tsunami” (*The Next Step Beyond* episode)

Tubb, E.C.

Tucker, Forrest

Tucker, Michael

*Tucker’s Witch* (TV series)

“The Tune in Dan’s Cafe” (*Rod Serling’s Night Gallery* episode)

“Tunguska” (*The X-Files* episode)

Tuntke, William

Turco, Paige

Turner, Brad

Tuttle, Lisa

Tweed, Shannon

“The Twelfth Cave” (*Poltergeist* episode)

*Twelve O’Clock High* (TV series)

*Twice Told Tales* (film)

*The Twilight Zone* (TV series/original)

*The Twilight Zone* (TV series/remake)

*Twilight Zone: The Movie* (film)

*The Twilight Zone Companion* (book)

*Twin Peaks* (TV series)

*Twin Peaks: Fire Walk with Me* (film)

“Twist” (*Alfred Hitchcock Presents* episode)

*Twist in the Tale* (alternate name for *Quinn Martin’s Tales of the Unexpected*)

“Twisted Sisters” (*Alfred Hitchcock Presents* episode)

“Two Fathers” (*The X-Files* episode)

“Two Hour Streets” (*The Sixth Sense* episode—unproduced)

“2Shy” (*The X-Files* episode)

Tyburn, Gene

Tynan, David

*UFO* (TV series)

“U.F.O.” (*Kolchak: The Night Stalker* episode)

“Uncle George” (*Darkroom* episode)

*Undersea Kingdom* (film)

“Undertaking Pallor” (*Tales from the Crypt* episode)

“Undue Process” (*Forever Knight* episode)

“The Unhappy Medium” (*Tales from the Darkside* episode)

“Unholy Congress” (*Poltergeist* episode)

Universal Studios

“An Unlocked Window” (*Alfred Hitchcock Presents* episode)

“The Unnatural” (*The X-Files* episode)

“Unreality TV” (*Forever Knight* episode)

“Unrequited” (*The X-Files* episode)

“Unruhe” (*The X-Files* episode)

*The Untouchables* (TV series)

*The Untouchables* (TV series/remake)

“Unusual Suspects” (*The X-Files* episode)

UPN

“The Upper Hand” (*The Evil Touch* episode)

Upton, Gabrielle

“Ursa Minor” (*Tales from the Darkside* episode)

USA Network

“User Deadly” (*Alfred Hitchcock Presents* episode)

V (TV series)

Vadim, Roger

Vallee, Rudy

“The Vampire” (*Kolchak: The Night Stalker* episode)

“The Vampire Hunter” (*Monsters* episode)

Van Ark, Joan

Van Elting, Kurt

Vane, Norman Thaddeus

“Vanessa in the Garden” (*Amazing Stories* episode)

“Vanity’s Mirror” (*Friday the the 13th* episode)

Van Patten, Dick

Van Valkenbergh, Deborah

Van Vleet, Richard

Van Vogt, A.E.

Vaughn, Robert

“Veil” (*Prey* episode)

“Vendetta” (*Poltergeist* episode)

“Vengeance” (*Prey* episode)

Ventrell, Peter

Ventresca, Vincent

Verhoeven, Paul

Vernon, Jackie

*Vertigo* (film)

“Very Careful Rape” (*Alfred Hitchcock Presents* episode)

“A Very Happy Ending” (*Alfred Hitchcock Presents* episode)

“Via Dolorosa” (*Millennium* episode)

“Videodate” (*The Hitchhiker* episode)

Vigoda, Abe

*Village of the Damned* (film)

Villalobos, Reynaldo

*The Visitor* (TV series)

Von Leer, Hunter

“Voodoo Child” (*She Wolf of London* episode)

“The Voodoo Mambo” (*Friday the the 13th* episode)

Voris, Cyrus

“Vortex” (*The Fantastic Journey* episode)

“The Voyage” (*The Evil Touch* episode)

*Voyagers* (TV series)

Vulich, John

*The Wackiest Ship in the Army* (TV series)

Waddell, Martin

Wagner, Lindsay

“The Waiting Game” (*Monsters* episode)

“The Waiting Room” (*Monsters* episode)

“The Waiting Room” (*Rod Serling’s Night Gallery* episode)

“Wake Me When I’m Dead” (*Alfred Hitchcock Presents* episode)

“The Walk” (*The X-Files* episode)

“Walkabout” (*Millennium* episode)

“Walking Distance” (*The Twilight Zone* episode)

Wallace, Art

Wallace, Earl

Wallace, Penelope

Wallach, Eli

Wallis, Shani

Walsh, Brigid

Walsh, Gwynyth

Walsh, J.T.

Walsh, Kenneth

Walsh, M. Emmet

Walston, Ray

Walter, Elizabeth

Walter, Jessica

Walton, Fred

Wandrei, Donald

*War and Remembrance* (miniseries)

“War of the Coprophages” (*The X-Files* episode)

*War of the Worlds* (TV series)

“War Zone” (*Angel* episode)

Ward, Fred

Ward, Megan

*Wargames* (film)

Warner, David

Warren, Lesley Ann

“The Warren Omission” (*Dark Skies* episode)

Wasson, Craig

Waters, Ed

Watson, Larry

WB Network

“We Shall Overcome” (*Dark Skies* episode)

Weathers, Carl

Weaver, Fritz

*The Web* (TV series)

Webb, Jack

Webber, Robert

“Wedding Bell Blues” (*Friday the the 13th* episode)

“The Wedding from Hell” (*Charmed* episode)

“Weeds” (*Millennium* episode)

Weiner, Andrew

Weingart, Mark



Weisman, Matthew

Weiss, Don

Weiss, Michael T.

Weitz, Bruce

Welch, Christopher T.

*Welcome to Paradox* (TV series)

“Welcome to Springwood” (*Freddy’s Nightmares* episode)

“Welcome to the Hellmouth” (*Buffy the Vampire Slayer* episode)

“Well-Cooked Hams” (*Tales from the Crypt* episode)

“The Well-Worn Lock” (*Millennium* episode)

Welles, Halsted

Welles, Orson

“The Wendigo” (*Charmed* episode)

*Werewolf* (TV series)

“Werewolf” (*Kolchak: The Night Stalker* episode)

“Werewolf Concerto” (*Tales from the Crypt* episode)

“Werewolf of Hollywood” (*Monsters* episode)

*Wes Craven Presents Wishmaster* (film)

*Wes Craven’s New Nightmare* (film)

West, Adam

West, Valerie

Westmore, Bud

Weston, Ellen

“Wetwired” (*The X-Files* episode)

“W.G.O.D.” (*The Hitchhiker* episode)

“What a Mother Wouldn’t Do” (*Friday the the 13th* episode)

“What a Pleasant Surprise” (*Dracula* episode)

“What You Don’t Know Can Kill You” (*Freddy’s Nightmares* episode)

“What’s Cookin’” (*Tales from the Crypt* episode)

“What’s Got into Them” (*She Wolf of London* episode)

“What’s My Line?” (*Buffy the Vampire Slayer* episode)

Wheaton, Wil

Whedon, Joss

*Wheel of Fortune* (TV series)

“When Bad Warlocks Go Good” (*Charmed* episode)

*When Dinosaurs Ruled the Earth* (film)

“When Morning Comes” (*The Hitchhiker* episode)

“When She Was Bad” (*Buffy the Vampire Slayer* episode)

“When This Man Dies” (*Alfred Hitchcock Presents* episode)

“Where Angels Fear to Tread” (*Curse of Dracula* chapter)

“Where Is the Rest of Me?” (*Monsters* episode)

“Where There’s Smoke” (*Beyond Reality* episode)

“Which Prue Is It, Anyway?” (*Charmed* episode)

“Whirlpool” (*Tales from the Crypt* episode)

“Whisper” (*Rod Serling’s Night Gallery* episode)

“Whisper of Evil” (*The Sixth Sense* episode)

White, Jesse

White, Tim

“White Rabbit” (*Dark Skies* episode)

*The White Shadow* (TV series)

“White Slaves” (*The Hitchhiker* episode)

Whitemore, Stanford

Whitman, Stuart

Whitney, Grace Lee

“Whole New You” (*The Hitchhiker* episode)

“Who’s There” (*Darkroom* episode)

“Why Are You Here?” (*The Hitchhiker* episode)

“Wicca Envy” (*Charmed* episode)

Wickes, David

“Wide Open” (*Millennium* episode)

Wiederhorn, Ken

Wiggins, Chris

“The Wild and the Innocent” (*Millennium* episode)

“Wild Fire” (*The Burning Zone* episode)

*Wild, Wild World of Animals* (TV series)

Wilde, Cornell

Wilder, John

Wilkins, Mary E.

Williams, John

Wills, Chill

Windom, William

“Windows” (*The Hitchhiker* episode)

Wingreen, Jason

“Wings of Death” (*The Evil Touch* episode)

Winkler, Henry

Wirth, Billy

Wisden, Robert

Wise, Ray

Wiseman, Joseph

“The Wish” (*Buffy the Vampire Slayer* episode)

“Wishful Thinking” (*Poltergeist* episode)

“The Witch” (*Buffy the Vampire Slayer* episode)

“The Witch Is Back” (*Charmed* episode)

“Witch, Witch Burning Bright” (*The Sixth Sense* episode)

“Witches Feast” (*Rod Serling’s Night Gallery* episode)

*Witches, Warlocks, and Werewolves* (anthology)

“With Affection, Jack the Ripper” (*The Sixth Sense* episode)

“With Apologies to Mr. Hyde” (*Rod Serling’s Night Gallery* episode)

“With This Ring, I Thee Kill” (*The Sixth Sense* episode)

“Witness Within” (*The Sixth Sense* episode)

Wittich, Katarina

*Wolf* (film)

*The Wolf Man* (film)

“The Wolf Who Thought He Was a Man” (*Werewolf* episode)

*Wolfen* (film)

Wollner, Donald

“The Woman in the Mirror” (*The Next Step Beyond* episode)

“Woman of His Dreams” (*Beyond Reality* episode)

*Wonder Woman* (TV series)

Wong, James

Wood, James

Wood, Lana

Woodville, Katharine

Woodward, Edward

Woolen, Susan

Wooley, Stu

Woolrich, Cornell

“Word Processor of the Gods” (*Tales from the Darkside* episode)

“Working Girl” (*The Hitchhiker* episode)

“A World of Difference” (*Twilight Zone* episode)

“A World of Difference” (*Werewolf* episode)

*World of Dracula*

“A World of His Own” (*Twilight Zone* episode)

“World’s Oldest Motive” (*Alfred Hitchcock Presents*)

Worldvision

Woronov, Mary

Worrell, Everil

Wright, Brad

Wright, Thomas

Wu, Vivian

Wyenn, Than

Wyllie, Meg

Wyman, Dan

Wyman, Jane

Wyn-Davies, Geraint

Wynn, Keenan

*The X-Files* (TV series)

*X-Files: Fight the Future* (film)

Yagher, Jeff

Yagher, Kevin

Yasbeck, Amy

Yates, William Robert

“The Yattering and Jack” (*Tales from the Darkside* episode)

“Year of the Monkey” (*Friday the 13th* episode)

“Yellow” (*Tales from the Crypt* episode)

York, John J.

“You Can Come Up Now, Mrs. Millikan” (*Rod Serling’s Night Gallery*)

“You Can’t Get Help Like That Anymore” (*Rod Serling’s Night Gallery* episode)

“You, Murderer!” (*Tales from the Crypt* episode)

Youdale, Diane

Young, Burt

Young, Collier

Young, Robert Malcolm

“Young and the Headless” (*Monsters* episode)

“Young at Heart” (*The X-Files* episode)

*Young Indiana Jones* (TV series)

“Young Man’s Fancy” (*Twilight Zone* episode)

“You’re Not Alone” (*Quinn Martin’s Tales of the Unexpected* episode)

“The Youth Killers” (*Kolchak* episode)

“Y2K” (*Psi Factor* episode)

Zabel, Bryce

Zabriskie, Grace

Zamacona, Jorge

Zamm, Alex

Zane, Billy

Zapata, Carmen

Zelinsky, Rafael

Zemeckis, Robert

“The Zeppo” (*Buffy the Vampire Slayer* episode)

“Zero Sum” (*The X-Files* episode)

Zetterling, Mai

Zicree, Marc Scott

Zimbalist, Stephanie

Zisk, Randy

“Zombie” (*Kolchak: The Night Stalker* episode)

*Zombies of the Stratosphere* (film)

Zuckerman, David